FORTS OF INDIA

Amrit Verma

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JAMMU AND KASHMIR
HARIPARBAT
KOT KANGRA
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUNJAB
KALIBANGAN
HARYANA
DELHI
BIKANER
AMBER
UTTAR PRADESH
RAJASTHAN
JAISALMER
AGRA
BHARATPUR
JODHPUR
RANTHAMBHORE
GWALIOR
KALINJAR
ALLAHABAD
ROHTASGARH
CHITOR
KUMBHALGARH
CHUNAR
BIHAR
AHMADABAD
CHAMPANIR
MADHYA PRADESH
GUJARAT
DABHOI
MANDU
FORT WILLIAM
DAULATABAD
MAHARASHTRA
ORISSA
AHMEDNAGAR
SHIVNER
SINHGARH
BIDAR
WARANGAL
RAIGARH
GULBARGA
GOLKUNDA
PANHALA
BIJAPUR
ANDHRA PRADESH
VIJAYANAGAR
KARNATAKA
SRIRANGAPATAM
GINGEE
TAMIL NADU
KERALA
LAKSHADWEEP (INDIA)
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
INDIAN OCEAN
SRI LANKA
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ASSAM
NAGALAND
MEGHALAYA
MANIPUR
BANGLADESH
TRIPURA
MIZORAM
WEST BENGAL
BURMA
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS (INDIA)
PAKISTAN

Based upon Survey of India outline map printed in 1980

The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
The boundary of Meghalaya shown on this map is as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, but has yet to be verified.

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Preface

This work is devoted to forts from antiquity to the present day India. To consign such a sweep to a handy size of 110 pages imposed the need of either sacrificing the coverage or the details, neither of which can be to the liking of an author. But bound as I was to this limit I had no way but to be ruthless with both facts and presentation, of course without omitting or losing anything of consequence.

Forts in India—ranging from Kalibangan to Fort William, Kalibangan being the most ancient and Fort William the latest one—are legion and it was a gigantic task to pick out the important ones for writing about from amongst the list of tens of hundreds scattered in gazetteers and other sources. The criterion for selection I adopted was the worthiness for defence and architecture, as also their competence in facing incursions and sieges. I hope the forts thus selected and which find place in this work will sustain reader's interest and make interesting reading.

A critical study shows that Rajasthan, Gujarat and Deccan abound with forts though in the heartland of India there were massive forts, viz. Gwalior, Kalinjar. The capital, Delhi, had, of course, a good many forts gifted by dynasties that ruled.

The printed literature on forts of India is scanty and that which is available lays stress either on architecture or defence or history. Exceptions are Kamalapuri's *Forts of Maharashtra* and Dr. N.S. Ramachandra Rao's *Forts in Ancient and Medieval Andhra—A Study*, the latter a thesis for doctorate. Similar studies on forts of Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh can be taken up by scholars. In the present work, my effort has been to acquaint readers with varied information not excluding myths and legends associated with some of the major forts of the country, scattered over its length and breadth. This may perhaps fill in the lacuna and help the reader to acquaint himself with forts, most of which are majestic despite passage of time.

In describing the forts I have kept in view their specialities. For instance, Agra Fort abounds in buildings and these are mentioned in the write up, but not those in Chitor Fort whose forte was valour.

Fortt provided protection from enemies. From their ramparts the enemy movements could be watched; and provisions, stores, water, and ammunition etc. inside the forts helped the army to face the assaults and also to carry out aggressive designs against the enemy outside. Modern warfare has changed the entire complex; satellites have rendered heights of no consequence, supplies are made by air, and even petrol can be filled in the sky or at sea. Yet the concepts of forts or the strategy of fortification retain their utility. For, seen critically, can we, for instance, deny that the underground bunker is the reverse of the fort ?

The subject of forts deserves an intensive and exhaustive study. But this is possible only if it is taken up as a project by an institute such as the Institute of Advanced Studies or the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library which can offer a fellowship.

A word about the spellings of proper names. I have followed the *Cambridge History of India* and *An Advance History of India*, though I do not agree with some of the spellings in these works. To me Chittor has greater appeal than Chitor. I prefer Babar to Babur, and so on. Yet, to avoid confusion, I have kept to the right of the authorities of the works mentioned above.

In writing this book I have largely relied on published material available in the libraries of the National Museum, Archaeological Survey of India, National Archives of India and P&T Board and thank their librarians for the facilities they provided me. I also thank many of my friends from different parts of the country from whom I could collect information of sorts on forts in their parts of the country. I thank Shri M. Swaminathan for typing out the manuscript. Also, I thank Dr. S.S. Shashi, but for whose reminders I could have still continued with my pursuit.

My thanks are also due to the Photo Section of the Archaeological Survey of India which supplied the photographs of the forts of Kalinjar, Kumbalgarh, Dhaboi, Champanir, Ahmedabad, Shivner, Sinhgarh, Raigarh, Rohtasgarh and Panhala, and Shri Kaushal Bhargava of Jaipur who made available two colour transparencies of Ranthambhore and Jaisalmer at a very short notice. Though one need not make one's sentiments about one's spouse public, I do take the liberty of recording my affectionate thanks to my husband Shri H.N. Verma who gave me unsparing support in whatever I demanded of him.

AMRIT VERMA

Contents

Forts in Ancient India 1

General 5

1. DELHI 7
2. GWALIOR 12
3. KALINJAR 15
4. KOT KANGRA 18

Forts of Rajasthan 21

5. JAISALMER 23
6. RANTHAMBHORE 24
7. CHITOR 27
8. KUMBHALGARH 30
9. JODHPUR 31
10. BIKANER 33
11. AMBER 35

Forts of Gujarat 37

12. DABHOI 39
13. CHAMPANIR 41
14. AHMEDABAD 43

Forts of Deccan 45

15. DAULATABAD 47
16. WARANGAL 49
17. VIJAYANAGAR 51
18. GULBARGA 53
19. GOLKUNDA 55
20. AHMADNAGAR 57
21. BIDAR 59
22. BIJAPUR 61

Afghan Forts 65

23. MANDU 67
24. ROHTASGARH 68
25. CHUNAR 71

Mughul Forts 75

26. ALLAHABAD 77
27. HARI PARBAT 79
28. AGRA 81

Maratha Forts 85

29. SHIVNER 87
30. SINHGARH 88
31. RAIGARH 90
32. PANHALA 93

South Indian Forts 95

33. SRIRANGAPATAM 97
34. GINGEE 99

Modern Forts 101

35. BHARATPUR 103

English Forts 107

36. FORT WILLIAM 109

Other Forts 111

Glossary 113

Bibliography 117

Index 121

Forts in Ancient India

FORTS as defensive measures existed in ancient India, perhaps even before the third millennium when the Indus Valley civilisation flowered over a large area in the north-west of the Indian subcontinent.

This may sound very ancient to us but elsewhere forts were built much earlier. For instance, Jericho city had a fortress as early as 7003 B.C. It had a 21 feet high wall encompassing an area of 10 acres and a 15 feet wide and 9 feet deep outer moat to protect the city. The Great Wall of China was built to discourage incursions of nomadic tribes by Emperor Shih Huang Ti in the 3rd century B.C. Compared to these, Indus Valley civilisation is younger.

Excavations at sites of the Indus Valley have unearthed palaces, defensive and offensive weapons and fortifications. Mohenjodaro and Harappa are two such earlier sites. Mohenjodaro had a 50 feet high citadel fortified by a baked brick wall and solid towers. On its summit were a long building (230 × 78 feet), perhaps the residence of a high official or priest, and a granary. The fortified citadel mound of Harappa with its rampart of mud brick tapered upward from a 40 feet base and a similar tapering external pavement of baked brick. In the 3000-yards space between the mound and the river were barrack-like blocks of workmen's quarters as also granaries in 1000 sq. yd. floor space.

The mounds of Kalibangan and Lothal belong almost to the same culture. Kalibangan, 100 miles south-east of Harappa, in the Ganganagar district of Rajasthan (and in the dry valley of the Ghaggar formerly known as Saraswati) had two small mounds, one smaller than the other. The smaller one had a citadel whose platforms were surrounded by walls with rectangular bastions. The southern side had an entrance built and a towered wall that was useful for defence. The larger mound was unfortified.

Lothal, 450 miles south-east of Mohenjodaro on the sea plain of Kathiawad, Dabar Kot in northern Baluchistan, and Amri 100 miles south of Mohenjodaro, were other mounds.

By the end of the third millennium, the Indus Valley civilisation had expanded and thrived over a vast area that extended from the western coastlands from Makrana to the Gulf of Cambay.

Excavations show that there were fortified villages, for instance, Kot Digi 25 miles north of Mohenjodaro; Sukta jen-dor (in Makrana) whose stone fortifications covered an area of 580×340 feet and which had a 25 feet wide wall, an internal 8 feet broad mud-brick platform and rectangular towers with 6 feet wide entrance in the southern wall. About 85 miles east there was a fortified settlement over an outcrop of rock and another one, Belakot, 45 miles north-west of Karachi. Forts proved helpful against attacks by enemies as also against inundations caused by overflowing rivers.

About 1700 B.C. geomorphological changes and periodical flooding in the Punjab and its environment set in internal decay.

Also, about the same time followed Aryan invasions. The walled cities (*purs*) could not withstand the attacks Vedic hymns define how Indra, the Aryan war-god (also known as Purandara), destroyed the forts of the aborigines and gave them to his protege, Divodasa. The Aryans gave the aborigines a final defeat at Hariyupiyu.

The Aryans had no fort of their own and had to face enemy attacks. The resources of fortifications which they captured from non-Aryans probably stood them in good stead and they utilised these to the best of their ability. Later, for maintaining their power, they too started building forts.

What was the nature of these strongholds? What was their size and shape and of what material were they built? They have been described mostly to be made of stone and sometimes of sun-dried bricks and elsewhere of hardened earths with palisades. They are also described as broad and wide.

In Rig-Veda there is also reference to the *pur charishnu*, i.e. moving fort. This may have been an engine for assaulting forts. Hildebrandt thinks that it was a kind of chariot. Strongholds have sometimes been referred to metaphorically as of metal, autumnal (perhaps meaning seasons), etc. Forts with a hundred walls are also mentioned.

To the first millennium B.C. belonged Jhusi, Bhita, Mathura and Kausambi. Kausambi besides the Jamuna had four miles by 30 feet long ramparts armed at regular intervals by bastions built of mud revetted externally with a battery and facing of baked bricks. This gave it an imposing frontage. The defences were removed more than once. Ahichhatra had towering ramparts three and a half miles long and two successive ramparts below a stone wall of red brick. Indrapat also belonged to this period.

The great epics mention fortifications. The *Ramayana* describes Ayodhya's fortifications. "Her walls extend twelve measured leagues from end to end. High are her ramparts strong and vast. Byways at even distance passed with circling moat, both deep and wide, and store of weapons fortified." The 'Balakand' describes Ayodhya as a city of defence and garrisoned by soldiers of all arms.

The *Mahabharata* (*Shanti Parva*) stresses that the king should reside in a city defended by a citadel, of having abundant stock of grains and weapons, protected by imperishable walls and trenches, which teem with elephants and stead cars, which is inhabited by men of learning and versed in mechanical arts, where provision of every item is stored. It classifies forts as *Dhava, Mahi, Giri, Manushya, Mru, Vana* and *Tani*. Sufficient care was taken to provide capital cities with best defence, e.g. Hastinapur was very well defended. While defending Dwarka, Ahuka or Ugrasen stood with his forces in array and invested the city that was well protected by fortifications, with arches, combatants, walls, turrets, engineers and miners, etc.

Agni Purana mentions that an empty arsenal is an indication of weak military system.

Bimbisar built a new city which he named Rajgriha or the king's palace. The defences of old Rajgir enclose the site of the city which, as the capital of Magadh, achieved distinction in the sixth century B.C. The work consists of a massive wall built of large unshapen stones, with square bastions at frequent intervals.

To repel the Vrajis, Ajatshatru built a fortress on the plains beside the Ganga where Patna now stands. The Pataliputra fortress, enlarged by Chandragupta Maurya in 320 B.C. formed an oblong over 9 miles beside the river and was over a mile wide. It was fortified by a ditch 200 yards broad and a timber palisade with towers and loopholes for arches.

During the early Magadhan epoch the king lived in his *pur** (fortified town) or *nagar* (city) which was well provided with strong ramparts, lofty walls, watch towers, pleasure parks, streets lighted with torches, assembly halls, dancing halls, gambling houses, courts of justice, work places for traders and artisans. The common people lived in villages. There were just a few large cities. Buddhist texts refer to seven such places, viz. Champa, Rajagriha, Sravasti, Saket, Kausambi, Vaisali and Varanasi.

Charsada (ancient Pushkalavati), the capital of Gandhara and Taxila (near Rawalpindi), both in Pakistan, had widespread mounds with interesting gaps. At Charsada, the Bala Hisar (a high fort) rose to 65 feet and was spread over 15 acres. The fortifications consisted of a ditch backed by an earthern rampart faced externally by a wall of mud-brick. The fort was besieged by a division of Alexander's troops in 327 B.C. and it took them 30 days to capture the place, which shows how well it was fortified.

The *Arthashastra* considers forts as one of the seven elements of sovereignty. Each frontier fort had to be specially guarded and was placed in charge

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* *Pur* means rampart, fort or stronghold. Indra is said to have demolished 99 or 100 castles of the aborigine leader Sambara. He rends forts as age consumes garments.

of an officer called Antapal. Kautilya classifies forts into four types, viz. i) *Parvata* (hill), ii) *Audaka* (water), iii) *Dhanvan* (desert), and iv) *Vandurga* (forest fort). Whereas water and mountain fortifications were considered best for the defence of populous centres, desert and forest fortifications were for habitations in wilderness.

Forts of later dates are : Pundranagar (Bangladesh), Shishupalgarh (Bhubaneshwar), Jaugada (Orissa), Ujjain, Maheshwara, Navda Toli (on Narbada opposite Maheshwara), Bahal (East Khandesh) Nasik, and Jorwa (near Ahmedabad). 'The Indian forts', says Dr. Thomas, 'were systematically designed with ditches, ramparts, battlements, covered ways, porticullises and watergates, and in the assault the arts of mining, countermining, flooding mines were employed no less than the devices of diplomacy.'*

The Gupta rulers laid more stress on vast strong army and discipline than on the construction of forts, although the cities were properly fortified and there were fixed hours for opening the gates of the city. Later Kannauj, the imperial capital of Harsha, was described by Hieun Tsang as very strongly defended with lofty structures everywhere.

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*Bimal Kanti Majumdar, *The Military System in Ancient India*, p. 95 (quote from *CHI*, Vol. 1, p. 490).

General

1. DELHI

DELHI is said to have been the site of seven cities and whenever a new city came up, protection had to be provided to it mostly in the form of a fort. Delhi thus abounds with forts, some of which are visible in their remnanrts some having mere walls, and hardly any in its original shape. Lal Kot, Rai Pithora and Siri exist in the ruins of their walls; the inside of Tughlaqabad and Kotla Feroze Shah are in slightly better shape and Purana Qila is better preserved. Lal Qila or Red Fort is the only fort that has withstood ravages but, more than time, when the Mughuls grew weak, plunderers and vandals played havoc with its precious possessions as well as with its inmates, including royalty.

The excavations conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India some time back in Purana Qila have unearthed a cultural sequence ranging in date from circa 1000 B.C. to the Mughul period. Perhaps Indraprastha founded by the Pandavas at the site where part of Delhi now exists. had no fort, and if at all it had some fortifications their traces are extinct. It is said, but there is no historical proof, that the Purana Qila was built in some other name by the Pandava brothers This is perhaps more of a myth.

Lal Kot, Rai Pithora, Siri

The earliest remains of a fort in Delhi are those of Lal Kot which is said to have been built by the Tomar King Anangpal in the year 1060. It extends from Adham Khan's tomb north-westwards.

Lal Kot was followed by the Qila Rai Pithora. The former was engulfed by the latter which was built by Rai Pithora better known as Prithvi Raj Chauhan. It is rectangular and covers a vast area—its south wall crosses the Gurgaon road close to Adham Khan's tomb, the north wall cuts the Delhi road near the tenth milestone from Delhi, half of the western wall is formed by the west wall of the inner citadel (Lal Kot) and the eastern wall cuts the Tughlaqabad road about one mile from the Qutb Minar. It was inside Rai Pithora that Qutb-ud-din Aibak built Jami or Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque to celebrate his conquest of Delhi.

The Muslim rulers of Delhi after Aibak were fond of founding cities and forts. Ala-ud-din Khalji built the fort of Siri in 1303. Siri had practically lost all its glory and even its name sounded unfamiliar to the residents of Delhi till the Asian Games resurrected it. The residential quarters built for foreign participants in the Asian Games at Siri have familiarised them with the name of Siri ; and to those interested in history, with its glorious past. Famous as Koshak-in-Siri or Alai Fort, it was

circular in shape, its walls were made of stone, brick and lime, and it had seven gates.

Tughlaqabad

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, shortly after ascending the throne in 1320, selected for his capital a new site on the edge of a rocky outcrop, about five miles from Qutb Minar and for strategic reasons built a massive fort around the city, which was named Tughlaqabad. Its scarped sides, sloping bastions, upper line of battlements to a height of 90 feet, vast size, strength and solidarity give it an air of stern and massive grandeur.

The fort of Tughlaqabad built of massive blocks of stone is half hexagon in shape. Its three faces are about three quarters of a mile in length each. The base is one and a half miles and the whole circuit about four miles. The wall has a circuit of four miles and encloses a large area, much of which is taken by the inner citadel and palace. The walls of ramparts are pierced with loop-holes which command the foot of the walls. Made of plainly dressed stones, the walls are rugged, slope inwards and are crowned with a line of battlements of solid stone and these too are provided with loopholes. The fort had 13 gates and three inner gates to the citadel and seven tanks for water.

The fort contained the famous Qasr-i-Hazar (Palace of a Thousand Pillars) of marble. Ibn Batuta describes the hall of audience as an immense chamber of 'a thousand columns. These pillars are of varnished wood, and support a wooden roof, painted in the most admirable style'.*

Of the Tughlaqabad fort nothing now remains except the bastioned walls, some underground chambers, lofty gateways, triple storeyed towers and a few of the massive ramparts. But whatever remains 'gives an idea of its sturdy vigour and impressive grandeur',* though its seeming impregnability has been questioned on the ground that it consisted of loose rubble with a facing of ashlar granite put together in great haste, owing perhaps to some imminent peril from the Mongols.

Adilabad

Mohammed bin Tughluq, the son-in-law of Ghiyas-ud-din, founded in the very first two years of his reign the small fortress of Adilabad and the city of Jahanpanah (the World Refuge), the latter by linking up the walls of old Delhi on the one side and Siri on the other, enclosing the suburbs that had grown between them. Its fortifications —36 feet in thickness and built of rough rubble in lime—are now level with the ground and in some places barely traceable.

Feroze Shah Kotla

The third of the Tughluq kings, Feroze Shah built the palace-fort of Firuzabad, known as Feroze Shah Kotla. Note-worthy features of its fortifications are the machicoulis and the absence of any raised beam or gallery to give access to the double lines of loopholes.

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* *Gazetteer of India*, Delhi, p. 1077.
+ ibid.

The palace and the citadel were provided with strong and massive 60 feet high ramparts. The citadel forming an irregular polygon on plain is now in ruinous condition. Little in the fort is left save some of the palace walls, the remains of a mosque and Ashoka's pillar which was brought from Topra, near Ambala.

Purana Qila

The Purana Qila was constructed on the site of Indraprastha partly by Humayun, who named it Dinpanah, and partly by Sher Shah who named it Shergarh. It is believed that the walls and gates were built by Humayun while the buildings within, viz. the Sher Mandal, a two storeyed octogonal tower, and the Qila-i-Khona, a beautiful mosque, are the work of Sher Shah. Sher Shah strengthened the citadel and his son Salim Shah further improved it. Humayun died from a slip from the stairs of Sher Mandal.

The Purana Qila has a perimeter of a mile and is circular in shape. Its east and west sides are larger. Its walls are 12 feet 6 inches thick and terminate with massive bastions at each corner. The walls of Purana Qila are not provided with frequent bastions and it is only the west wall which possesses any intermediate bastion at all, the curtain between them averaging 240 feet. This was probably for the reason that water on the remaining sides hindered assault as the river then washed the eastern side of the fort and gave strength to the defence of the bastioned ramparts. In its gates the Purana Qila has a unique synthesis of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture—the pointed arch of the Muslims harmonises with the Hindu *chhatris* while Hindu brackets support pavilions. The Tallaqi Darwaza has a representation of solar orb. Its roof is crowned by three *chhatris* and supported on columns of red sandstone—originally its top had been covered with dazzling white *chunam* and coloured tiles.

Salimgarh

The ruins of the Salimgarh Fort are found near the old railway bridge connecting Delhi with Shahdara. It was built in 1546 by Salim Shah, son and successor of Sher Shah, as a bulwark against the return of Humayun. This Salim is sometimes confused with Salim, son of Akbar.

In 1622 Jahangir built a bridge to connect the south gate of the Red Fort with Salimgarh. Later the bridge was removed to make way for the railway bridge. In later Mughul times Salimgarh was chiefly used as a prison.

Red Fort

Red Fort or Lal Qila as it is popularly known is one of the most exquisite forts of the world.

Emperor Shahjahan had reigned for eleven years at Agra, which he found very warm and its fort too small to accommodate the army, when he decided to transfer the capital to Delhi. There also lurked an aspiration to found a city in his own name—Shahjahanabad. A site not far from Humayun's tomb on the bank of Jamuna was selected and the emperor ordered engineers and architects to prepare a plan for

a palace similar to that of Agra and Lahore. Construction of buildings started in 1638 under the supervision of Izzat Khan, later of Ali Vardi Khan, followed by Markamat Khan, Ahmad and Hamid, reputed engineers. The fort was completed in 1648 at a cost of ten crore rupees.

The fort was inaugurated with great fanfare. Brocaded velvet from Turkey and silk from China were hung on the roof, walls and colonnades of the Diwan-i-Am. A gorgeous canopy 210 feet by 135 feet was supported by silver columns while another splendid canopy for the throne was supported by golden pillars, wreathed with bands of studded gems.

The Red Fort is an irregular octagon, its two long sides are on the east and west while six smaller sides are on the north and south. It is 3000 feet long and 1800 feet broad and has a circumference of one and a half miles. The walls made of red sandstone—for which reason it is known as Red Fort—are covered with a succession of turrets, kiosks, domes, balconies, windows and perforated screens. The walls facing the river are 60 feet high while elsewhere they are 110 feet high. The towers and kiosks lend charm and grace to the walls which glow in soft rays of the setting sun. A ditch 75 feet wide and 30 feet deep, filled with water and stocked with fish, ran round the walls of the fort except on the river face.

The Red Fort has two entrances, Lahori Gate and Delhi Gate. The Lahori Gate, 41 feet by 24 feet, faces the famous Chandni Chowk and with its towers and central arch is imposing. It is protected by a barbican which was built by Aurangazeb, and its drawbridge was replaced by bridges built by Akbar II. A garden was planned in front of the Lahori Gate. A square adjacent to it was the hub of activity. Mughul officials gathered here to mount guard or to attend the Diwan-i-Am or Diwan-i-Khas.

The Lahori Gate gives access to the Chhatta Chowk (the vaulted arcade)—230 feet long and 27 feet wide—and an uncovered central octagonal court. On each side of the arcade are 32 arched rooms which were originally shops. Here sat the court jewellers, goldsmiths, picture painters, workers in enamel, carpet manufacturers, weavers of silk and other artisans with costly luxuries.

Diwan-i-Am : The arcade leads into a square which had in its centre Naubat or Naqqarkhana—the royal band. This was a gateway to the Diwan-i-Am or Hall of Public Audience—a colonnaded hall open on three sides and enclosed at the back. Though built of sandstone, it was covered with shell plaster. It is divided into three aisles each 7 feet apart by columns which support arches. In the recess of the back wall stood the peacock throne valued at '6 million sterling'. It was later removed to Diwan-i-Khas and subsequently taken by Nadir Shah in 1739. The hall is now shorn of its splendour and glory—all its decorations have been removed.

Diwan-i-Khas : or Hall of Private

Audience—a pavilion of white marble supported by pillars of marble and mosaic work of cornelian and other stones —is more majestic. Engrailed arches on square marble piers divide the hall into 15 bays. Inlaid flowers on the piers, elegant perforated tracery and graceful multifoil arches picked out in gold and colours added to its beauty. It had a silver ceiling decorated with gold and inlay work.

Diwan-i-Khas mirrors not only the glory of the Mughuls but their tragedy also, particularly when they had lost their vigour. Here in 1739 Emperor Mohammed Shah made his submission to Nadir Shah who robbed him of his most valuable treasures ; in 1757 Ahmad Shah Abdali looted and *inter alia* took back with him a Mughul princess as consort; in 1787 the Rohilla Ghulam Qadir blinded Emperor Shah Alam; in 1857-58 the last emperor Bahadur Shah fought, lost, was tried and exiled to Rangoon.

Rang Mahal : The Rang Mahal, Shajahan's seraglio, is remarkable for its architecture and decoration. Its central hall with small compartments at each end, is divided into 15 bays by ornamental piers. Its ceiling was of silver and walls of gilt and colour. In the reign of Farrukhsiyar, the silver was taken off to meet pressing needs and was replaced by copper which too was removed during the time of Akbar II and replaced by a wooden ceiling. Little of the metal painting is visible. The eastern wall of the building has fine windows overlooking Jamuna wherefrom ladies of the *zenana* watched elephants fight near the foot of the walls. There is a marble fountain in the centre of the hall which was fed water from a branch of Ali Mardan's canal brought from the Jamuna some six miles above Delhi. The stream cascaded down the marble chute in the Shah Burj, and traversed through a number of edifices.

Between the Diwan-i-Am and Rang Mahal there was a garden.

Other Buildings : Other notable buildings in the Red Fort are Musamman Burj, Khwabgah, Hammam, Sawan-Bhadon, Moti Masjid (built by Aurangazeb) and Hira Manzil (built by Bahadur Shah).

The Red Fort is symbol of India's independence. In its military barracks took place the famous trial of the three INA (Indian National Army) officers-Sahgal, Shah Nawaz and Dhillon—who had actively associated themselves with the army set up by Subhas Chandra Bose and who fought against the British forces.

Every year on the country's Independence Day, 15th August, the Prime Minister unfurls from the ramparts of Red Fort the national flag and sends out a message to the people of India—a reminder of their heroic struggle against an imperial power and the need of unity for making concerted efforts for the strength and prosperity of India.

2. GWALIOR

GWALIOR, 200 miles south of Delhi, is strategically located on the north-south route. Therefore its possession or hold on it was considered essential by the rulers of Delhi so as to have passage to and control and governance of southern regions. The grandeur and majesty of the Gwalior Fort has to be appreciated even today, but more important than its aesthetic appearance was the defensive objectives it served. It witnessed many sieges and fierce battles but was never obliged to surrender, though it could be gained either by assault or surrender. The Gwalior Fort was highly impregnable; may be it was for this reason that it was sometimes used as prison to hold important personages who could harm, if freed, the interests of the rulers. But no less important is the fact that from this fort Rani Mrignaina and subsequently others gave patronage to music. From Gwalior originated a school of music which has continued through centuries and even now Gwalior can boast of a *gharana*. The tomb of Tansen who was associated with Gwalior is there just below the fort and musicians come to pay their homage to the maestro.

Towering 300 feet above the old town, the Gwalior Fort is situated on a precipitous, flat-topped, isolated sandstone hill. It measures one and three-quarter miles in length and 2,800 feet across at its widest part, its walls above the scarp are about 30 feet high. Whereas a long line of battlements crowning the scarp on the east make it impregnable, its western side suffers from weakness.

Legend has it that the fort was founded by Suraj Sen, a Rajput chief, at the instance of an ascetic named Gwalip, who had cured him of leprosy, and after whom it came to be known as Gwalior, Gopagiri, Gopadri, Gopachala, Gwaliwara. Inscriptions suggest that in the 6th century the Gwalior Fort formed part of the Gupta empire and that it was captured by the Hun adventurers Toramana and his son Mihirakula. Three centuries later, it passed into the hands of Raja Bhoj of Kanauj and in the mid-tenth century it further changed hands and came in possession of the Kachhwahas.

In 1022 Mahmud of Ghazni made an assault on the fort but he was bought off. In 1128 the Kachhwahas were ousted by the Parihars who remained in possession of the fort till 1196, when it was acquired by Qutb-ud-din Aibak. In 1210 during his son's rule, the Pariharas recovered it and for the next 22 years it remained in their possession. In 1232 Iltutmish laid a siege which lasted 11 months and it was only after a fierce fight that he succeeded in capturing it. From then on the fort came

to be used for imprisoning opponents, many of whom never came out alive. Iltutmish executed 700 prisoners before his tent. In 1316 Qutbuddin Mubarak Khalji put to death his three brothers living as blinded prisoners in the fort. Two decades later Mohammed bin Tughluq imprisoned all those whom he suspected or feared as per Ibn Batuta.

Timur's invasion in 1398 caused disturbance in the country and in the confusion the Tomar Rajputs seized the fort of Gwalior. In their time Gwalior rose to great eminence. They sucessfully threw off the attacks made on the fort in 1404, 1416 and 1429. Raja Mansingh (1486-1517) built a magnificent palace with a great gate which crowns the eastern face of the rock. It was under the directions of his favourite Gujari Queen Mrignaina (fawn-eyed) when music developed and Gwalior became pre-eminent as the home of music, which it has continued to enjoy till date. The Tomars retained their hold till 1518 when after a siege of two years they surrendered it to Ibrahim Lodi. The Lodis held it only for 10 years when Babur invaded and captured the fort. In 1542 it fell to Sher Shah Suri who treated it as a favourite resort.

In 1558 the Gwalior Fort passed into the hands of Akbar and remained in Mughul possession till the eighteenth century. During Mughul times the fort again came to be used as a state prison and of the many members of the ruling house who entered the fort, few could leave it. Political prisoners fared still worse. They were made to drink a decoction of crushed poppy seeds which produced insanity and finally caused death.

The Marathas captured Gwalior from the Mughuls. Then in 1760, guided by a shepherd, two English companies led by Captain Bruce and Major Popham, wearing grass shoes which prevented them from slipping on the edges of the rock, invested the fort and captured it. As already mentioned the west side of the fort is weak and it was from there that the British commanders attacked a second time in 1780.

The Third Battle of Panipat (1761) proved disastrous for the Marathas. Confusion prevailed everywhere and the Jat chief of Gohad, Lokendra Singh obtained possession of the fort. But this was shortlived and soon he was driven out by the Scindia. In 1804 General White took it but the very next year it was again made over to Scindia. In 1843 the fort was garrisoned by the Gwalior contingent under British officers who continued their charge till 1857 when a rebellion took place. The following year a party under Sir Hugh Rose took the fort by assault. But the battle was well fought. The English party crept up the rock and burst upon the main gateway of the fort, taking the opponent by surprise. A hand to hand encounter evolved but finally success lay in the hands of the British, though Sir Hugh Rose lost his life. He called Gwalior Fort, 'one of the most important and strongest fortresses of India,' A detachment of the British garrison at Merar held the Gwalior Fort until 1886 when it was exchanged with the Scindia for Jhansi.

Gates : The Gwalior Fort contains many objects of historical and antiquarian interest. There are three entrances to the fortress, one on the eastern side where a long ramp affords an extended view of the plains below. It is protected by six gates, namely Alamgiri, Badalgarh or Hindola Paur, Bhairon or Bansor Paur, Ganesh Paur, Lakshman Paur or Hathi Paur. The lowest gate Alamgiri Darwaza was named after Aurangazeb and was added in 1660 by Governor Motamid Khan. The Badalgarh Pol at the summit, built in the 15th century, was named after Badal Singh, uncle of Raja Mansingh. A large bull enshrined in this gate was carried off to Delhi on its capture by Ibrahim Lodi in 1518. The Bhairon gate, in its old Kachhwaha style, is attributed to Bhairon Pal. On one of its jambs there is a short inscription dated 1485. The Ganesh gate, erected by Raja Dungar Singh who reigned between 1424 and 1454, has a small shrine of Ganesh. It was built by Motamid Khan. Near the Lakshman gate is a small rock-cut temple in ninth-century style. Hewn out of the hillside it is dedicated to the four-armed Vishnu and bears an inscription of Raja Bhoj of Kanauj dated 876, in which he is termed as Gopagiriswami or 'Lord of Gwalior'.

Palaces : There are six palaces in the fort, namely Karan or Kirti Mandir, Man, Gujari, Vikram, Shish or Jahangir Mahal and Shahjahan Mahal. The Kirti Mandir built by Raja Kirti Singh Tomar who ruled from 1454 to 1479, is a magnificent palace. On its eastern face it has two extra storeys of underground rooms for use in hot weather. Its wall, hewn from sandstone blocks, is 300 feet long, 160 feet broad and 100 feet high It is relieved along the top by an ornamental frieze of coloured tiles, and at intervals along the front by massive round towers crowned with graceful domes and connected together by a balustrade of delicately fretted stonework. Its rooms and courtyards are richly carved, and were profusely ornamented with coloured tiles, of which only a few now remain. Emperor Babur, who visited the palace in 1529 about twenty years after its completion, has left a graphic account of its appearance. He notes that the palaces are singularly beautiful but are built without regular plan, and adds that the facade was covered with white stucco; the south-eastern corner of the fort has a noble quadrangle full of fine sculpture and mouldings, and some fine windows. The total length of the gallaries in both the palaces is about 1200 feet. The later buildings, viz. Shish Mahal and Shahjahan Mahal built of rubble and plaster, are poor.

Temples : The temples of Gwalior which are of special significance, fortunately escaped destruction by Sikandar Lodi. Two of these, Sas Bahu mandirs are beautiful examples of 11th century work. The foundation of the larger temple was laid in 1092 and was completed the following year by Mahipala the Kachhwaha chief, and the smaller temple was also built during the same period. The third temple, the Teli Mandir or oilman's temple, is the loftiest building—110 feet high—in the fort. Its roof distinguishes it from other temples in northern India. The lower portion of the building is in north Indian style, while the roof is in south Indina

style resembling Mahabalipuram. It was first a Vishnu temple but later converted to a Ganesh temple and dates back to 10th or 11th century. A Jain mandir with a colossal 57 feet high figure of Parasnath belongs to the 12th century. When Babur noticed this figure, he ordered all statues to be destroyed, but only some of those that could be easily erased were partly mutilated.

Tanks : There was never paucity of water in the Gwalior Fort in olden days, which is why it could withstand long sieges and Tavernier gave Gwalior the first place among the fortresses of India. The Suraj Kund is the oldest tank and women and children of Rajput families sacrificed themselves by *johar* in this tank to escape capture when the fort was taken by Iltutmish in 1232.

An inscription shows that a sun temple built by Matricheta in A.D. 525—the 15th regnal year of the Huna conqueror Mihirakula—has completely disappeared.

3. KALINJAR

ONE of the most ancient and strategically located forts of India, the Kalinjar in Bundel Khand, was the site of several battles and many an illustrious name such as Mahmud Ghazni, Prithvi Raj Chauhan, Qutb-ud-din Aibak, Humayun, Sher Shah Suri, Akbar, Chhatrasal were associated with it.

Kalinjar has been referred to in ancient literature. The Vedas refer to it as *Tapasthali*, i. e. place for penance, the *Mahabharata* mentions it for its lake, and the *Padmapurana* for its holiness. Ptolemy named it as Tamasis. In the olden days Kalinjar was known as Ratnakuta, Mahagiri, Pingala.

Kalinjar (or Kalam-Jar), which literally means the one who causes time to grow old, stands on an isolated Vindhyan top at an elevation of 1200 feet from sea level. The summit of the fort, oblong in shape and nearly a mile in length and half a mile in breadth, is fortified by a rampart nearly four miles in circuit and constructed of large blocks of stone. Access to the fort is by a sloping pathway and the flight of steps passes through seven gateways with inscriptions. It had two entrances—Alam Darwaza and Panna Darwaza. The Alam Darwaza, a battlemented building added during Aurangazeb's time, was guarded by other gates, viz. Ganesh, Chandi, Budhbhadra, Hanuman, Lal. Inside the fort are many palaces (built by Chandella kings), rock-cut tanks and caves. Many of the palaces bear carvings and inscriptions, some of which have yielded important historical information. Water stored in tanks was available in plenty, which was a strong point of defence.

Sieges by Mahmud Ghazni

According to Ferista, Kalinjar was founded by Kedar Raja in the 7th century.

According to a source, the first person of note connected with Kalinjar was Chandra Varma who laid its foundation in 978. The Raja of Kalinjar with Jaipal, the Raja of Lahore, and others attacked Ghazni in 978 but the invasion proved unsuccessful. Again in 1008 the king of Kalinjar sided with Anand Pal in the battle of Peshawar so as to check the invasion by Mahmud of Ghazni.

In the year 1022-23 Kalinjar Fort was besieged by Mahmud of Ghazni. The king collected an army of 36,000 horse, 105,000 foot and 640 elephants to oppose the invaders. Historian Nizammudin Ahmed writes, 'Sultan sent his ambassador to the Raja to embrace Islam. Nanda refused and prepared to fight. After reconnoitring the Kalinjar vast forces Sultan regretted his having come there. Prostrating himself before God, he prayed for success and victory. When night came on great fear and alarm entered the mind of Nanda and he fled with some of his personal attendants, leaving all his baggage and equipments. Next day the Sultan being apprised of this rode out on horse back without any escort and carefully examined the ground and he started plunder and devastation. The Sultan loaded with victory and success returned to Ghazni.'*

According to Ferista, the next year Mahmud undertook another expedition against Kalinjar. He writes, "This is a fort unparalleled in the whole history of Hindustan for its strength. He invested this fort for some time. Nanda its Chief presented 300 elephants and sued for peace. As the animals were sent out of the fort without riders, the Sultan ordered the Turks to seize and mount them'. The enemy, perceiving this, was much surprised and Nanda sent a copy of Hindi verses in praise of the Sultan who was much pleased with the compliments and later conferred the grant of 15 forts on him".

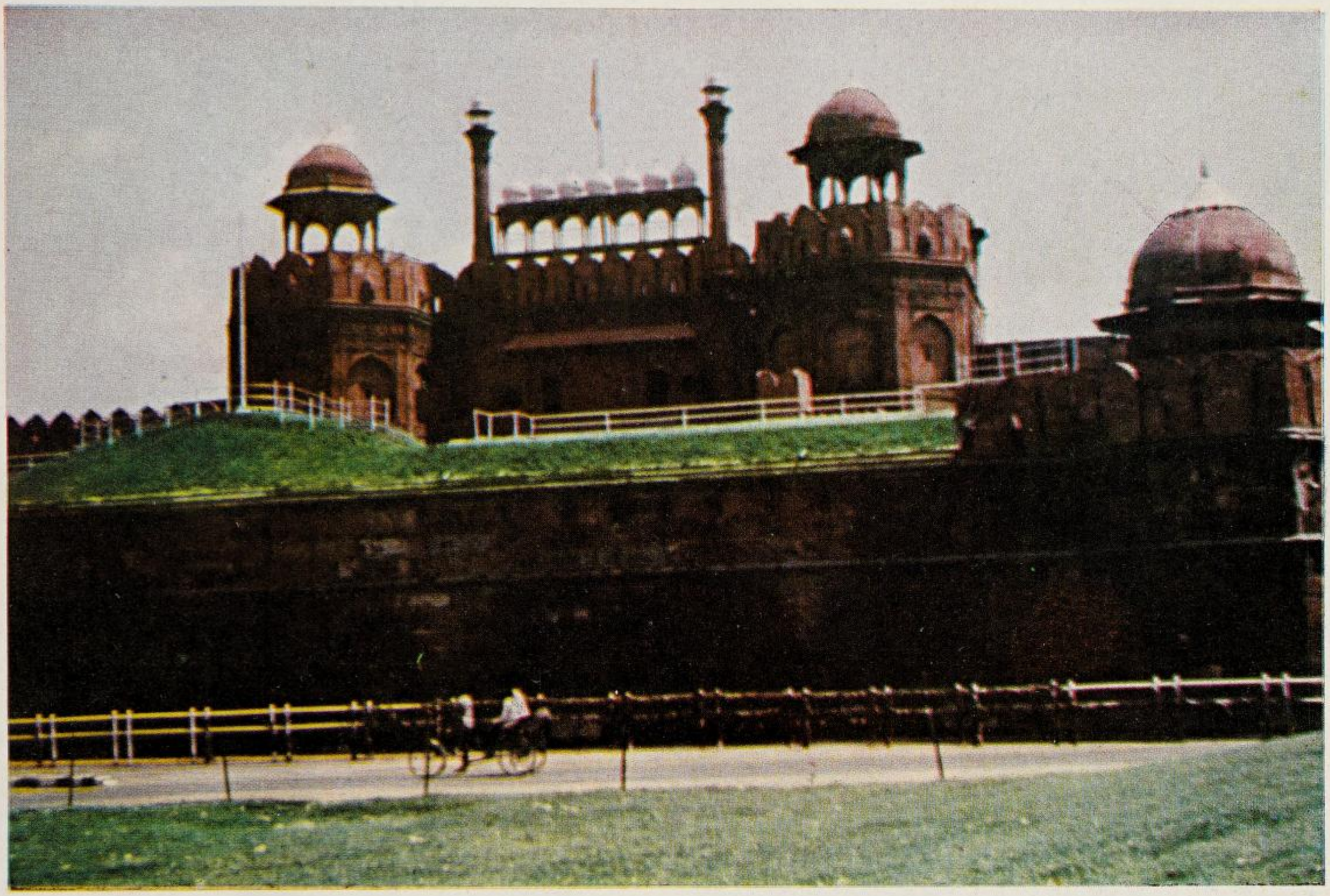
According to historian Hasan Nizami, 'The accused Parmar, the Raja ofKalinjar fled into the fort after a desperate resistence in the field and afterwards surrendered himself, and placed the collar of subjection round his neck. On Monday, the 20th Rajab, the garrison in an exclusive state of weakness and discretion came out of the fort and by compulsion left the native place empty and the fort of Kalinjar which was celebrated throughout the world for being as strong as the wall of Alexander was taken. The government of Kalinjar was entrusted to Hazuar Ud-din-Hasan Arnal and the fort became a part of the Mohammedan kingdom of Delhi and soon fell into the hands of the Hindus.'

Chandellas

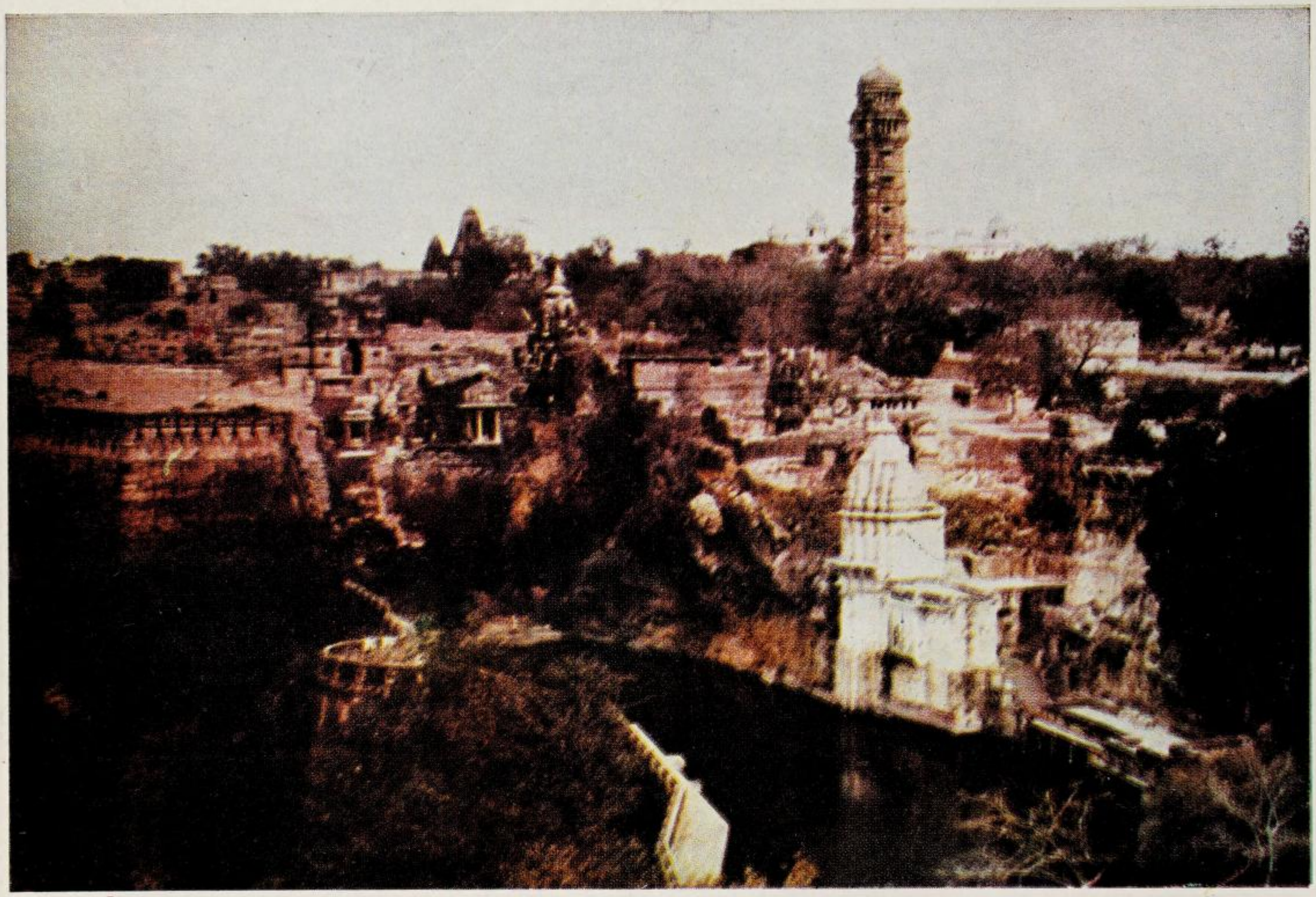
In 1023 Mahmud Ghazni again besieged the fort but came to terms with the Chandel Raja. There is an inscription of 1131 about a victory of the Chandellas. In 1182 the Chandella king, after being defeated by Prithviraj of Delhi, shifted his capital from Mahoba to Kalinjar.

In 1202 Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the viceroy of Mohammed Gauri, took Kalinjar and converted its temples into mosques.

*Nizamuddin Ahmed quoted by Archaeological Survey Report Vol. XXI, by Maj. Ian A. Cumingham.



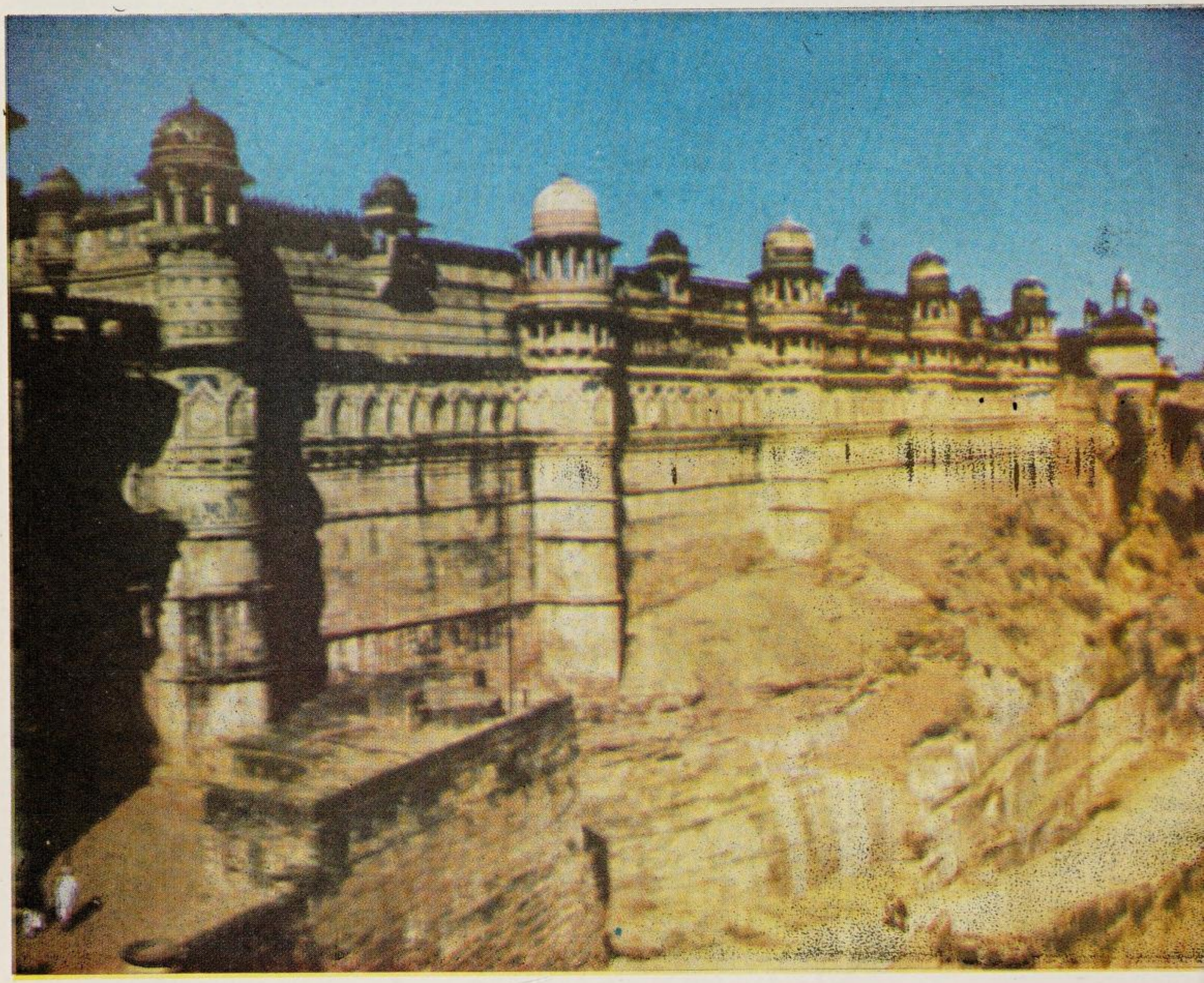
Red Fort, Delhi



Chitor Fort

Jaiselmer Fort

Ranthambore Fort



Gwalior Fort

The *Tazul Massir** says that Parmar was the king of Kalinjar. Qutb-ud-din accompanied by Shamsuddin Iltutmish attacked the fort. The Raja fled and later sued for peace, promising payment of the tribute and elephants but he died before he could execute any of the arrangements. His dewan Ajai Deo was not disposed to yield so easily. Relying on springs for water in the fort, Ajai Deo gave his enemy much trouble but the garrison marched out and the Mohammedans took possession of the fort. The temples were converted into mosques, and 50,000 men were slain (or taken prisoner) and countless treasures and arms fell as spoils to the victors. Hazuar-ud-din was appointed as the governor of Kalinjar. Attacks on the fort followed in 1208 and 1234. In another invasion of 1251 Sultan Nasir-ud-din Mahmud marched towards Kalinjar. In 1255 Kutlugh Khan, stepfather of the emperor, rebelled and fled to Kalinjar which he made a base for his operations.

The Chandellas retook it and Kalinjar remained in their possession for the next three centuries.

Sher Shah and Mughuls

In 1530 Prince Humayun besieged Kalinjar and the siege continued intermittently for ten long years, when it had to be recalled due to his father Babur's illness. The next year the fort was again invested but it had again to be abandoned due to rebellion in the eastern provinces. But as Humayun wanted the fort to serve as a base for invading the lower Doab, he again besieged it in 1542.

Three years later Sher Shah asked Kalinjar's Raja Kirat Singh to surrender the fort. On the latter's refusal, Sher Shah ordered the fort to be invested. The siege lasted one year. Mounds were thrown up against the fort and these rose so high that they overtopped the fort. Abbas Khan, the chronicler of Sher Shah, accounts the delay in the siege to Sher Shah's enamour of a Patna dancing girl belonging to Kirat Singh and his apprehension that if an assault was made, the Raja would order *johar* and the girl would die. Sher Shah ascended a high tower in the line of circumvallation, ordered one of his officers to bring a supply of loaded shells and more rockets. He amused himself in the meantime by shooting arrows into the town. When the rockets were brought, one of them was fired against the gate of the town, but it rebounded and fell into and ignited a heap of ammunition. Sher Shah who was standing nearby was possibly burnt and had to be carried to his tent. He summoned his nobles who swarmed out instantly from every direction. As per historian Abbas Khan, Sher Shah commanded them to capture the fortress. Kirat Singh was with 70 men in the fort and was under constant watch in the night by Qutb Khan lest he escaped. The next day the Raja was captured alive and the fort taken. The garrison was put to sword. Hearing of it Sher Shah died content on 24 May 1545. His son Jalal-ud-din captured the citadel.

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*Edwin T. Atkinson, *Statistical Description and Historical Account of North Indian Provinces of India*, Vol. 1, Bundelkhand, p. 449.

Mughuls

As the hold of the Afghans loosened, the fort came into the hands of the Rajput chief of Rewa, Raja Ramachandra. In 1569 Majnu Khan, the commander of Bihar, attacked the fort. Finding his position untenable, the Raja preferred to surrender to Akbar who gave the fort in *Jagir* to Birbal. For 120 years Kalinjar remained in the undisputed possession of the Mughuls. But towards the end of the reign of Aurangazeb, when he was campaigning in Deccan, the Bundela chief Chhatrasal captured Kalinjar. On his death it passed into the possession of Hardeo Singh of Panna, whose descendants possessed it for long. But the fort was virtually in the control of a Brahmin family.

Marathas and British

During the period of Maratha supremacy, Ali Bahadur of Banda laid siege to the fort for two years but he could not take it. Later the British succeeded in occupying it and they gave its possession to one Daryab Singh. But the latter openly defied the British authority and gave shelter to anti-British elements. When negotiations failed in 1818 a force under Col. Martindel attacked Kalinjar and in spite of resistence of missiles they rushed forward. But they were held back by precipitous rocks. When they tried to ascend by ladders, they were knocked down by heavy stones hurled by defenders. The assault, however, had its effect. The next day the *kiledar* sent a proposal to surrender the fort and within eight days he gave up the fort. Daryab Singh was given an estate in the plains.

During 1857-58 turmoil the English succeeded in retaining their hold over Kalinjar Fort with the assistance of Raja of Panna. A decade later in 1866 the fortifications of Kalinjar were dismantled to ward off trouble for good.

4. KOT KANGRA

KOT KANGRA, in Himachal Pradesh crowns a precipitous rock that dominates the surrounding area. It is surrounded on three sides from inaccessible cliffs and because of its strong position and massive walls, the fort was considered impregnable. And, though it was attacked many times, it could never be taken by storm. Once it withstood a siege for 12 months.

Kangra was renowned in ancient times for the *Jwalamukhi* (eternal flame) and people from far and wide flocked to the shrine to offer their worship, which brought in immense wealth. It commanded so much respect that the inmates took no care for its protection till Mahmud Ghazni attacked it in 1009. The fort was without a garrison and the priest offered to surrender. They

parleyed for some time and on the third day opened the gates. A huge booty fell into the hands of the invaders which is said to have amounted to 700,000 gold dinars, 700 mounds of gold and silver plates, 200 mounds of pure gold in ingots, 200 mounds of silver and 20 mounds of jewels, including pearls, corals, diamonds and rubies. On his return Mahmud displayed the wealth piled on carpets in the courtyard of his palace to the wondering eyes of his subjects.

Around 1044 Mahipal the Raja of Delhi reoccupied Kangra. Mohammed bin Tughluq conquered Nagarkot* in 1337 but it soon slipped out of the control of Delhi. In 1351 the Raja of Kangra ventured to invade the neighbouring areas under Tughluq rule and plundered some of the districts. Alarmed at this, Firuz Tughluq who was on his way to Daulatabad changed course and marched towards Sirhind and then on to Kangra. The Raja stood siege for some time but then surrendered. He was courteously received and permitted to retain his territory. Firuz's Nagarkot campaign is interesting – he caused 300 volumes of Sanskrit books preserved in the temple of Jwalamukhi to be rendered into Persian verse under the title of Dala-il-i-Firuz Shahi by a court poet named Aazz-ud-din Khalid Khani.

In 1398 Timur attacked Delhi. Later his grandson Pir Muhammed captured Kangra on 16 January 1399.

Akbar was displeased with Jaichand, Raja of Nagarkot, and imprisoned him. On hearing of this, his son Bidai Chand thought that his father had been murdered and he rebelled at Nagarkot some time around 1570. Akbar ordered Husain Quli Khan, the governor of Punjab to capture Nagarkot and hand it over as a fief to Raja Birbal. Later while on march to Attock, Akbar himself visited Nagarkot.

So far the Mughuls had been able to subdue the hill country of Kangra but the fort had still held out. Initially Jahangir's effort to subdue the stronghold also failed, that for the reason the commander did not press his attack because of his sympathy with the holders of the fort. A revolt then broke out. Raja Bikramajit was sent out from Delhi to crush the revolt. After a siege of more than a year during which the garrison was nearly starved, the fort surrendered towards the end of 1620. Though the capture was of no political importance, it got him substantial booty and he received exquisite pleasure that his forces had succeeded where so many of his predecessors had failed.

Under the Mughuls, Kangra was permanently garrisoned and in the cession of 1752 it should have passed on to Ahmed Shah Durrani. But the governor Saif Khan refused to surrender and maintained himself in the fort for twenty years. After his death in 1774, Sansarchand, the Katoch Raja of Kangra laid siege to the fort but was unable to reduce it. He then invited the Sikh chieftain Jaisingh Kanheya to assist him in taking the fortress. Jai Singh despatched Gurbakhsh Singh who

*Abul Fazl in *Ain-e-Akbari* has indicated the distinction between Nagarkot and Kangra. Nagarkot was the name of the town and Kangra of the fort.

procured the surrender of the fortress for his master and not for Sansarchand. He held it till 1784-85 when he left it to its legitimate owner Sansarchand.

Kangra was besieged from 1806 to 1809 by the Gurkhas. Tired of the havoc they played, Sansarchand, invoked the succour of Ranjit Singh. The Sikhs entered Kangra and gave battle to the Gurkhas, in 1809 and signed an agreement In return for the services, Ranjit Singh appropriated the fort of Kangra for himself. It remained in the possession of Lahore Durbar till 1846 when the Jullundar Doab was ceded to the British. Despite the cession the commandant of the fort refused to surrender. But after it was vested for two months by a British brigade, the governor agreed to evacuate it on condition that a free and honourable passage would be given to him and his men. After the surrender the British occupied the fort. The town, the fort and temples were destroyed by an earthquake in 1905.

Forts of Rajasthan

TO the rulers of states in Rajasthan, which literally means the Land of Kings and who claimed to be offsprings of the sun, moon or some such phenomenon, freedom was the most precious possession for which they considered no price, no sacrifice big enough. They could not compromise when any demand from their opponents clashed with their sense of self respect. Protection, under the prevailing conditions, required of them to shield their chivalry with strongholds. This explains the large number of forts in Rajasthan and also how a specific type of architecture of forts developed there. The regions of Rajasthan fort-wise had their own speciality. In Mewar, for instance, forts were planned and built to serve defensive needs primarily, while those in Amber and Marwar concentrated on presenting striking appearance.

Some of the forts had massive stone walls running round precipitous hills, which had within palaces, temples, provisions, houses and tanks. Some of these hill forts, for instance, Taragarh, Alwar, Jaipur served as outposts. The frontier forts of Kumbhalgarh and Gogund commanded passes and provided relief when the capitals had to be abandoned to avoid unnecessary annihilation. Bhainsoragarh, Mandalgarh, Indergarh had their contributions to make. Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Bundi were other forts that witnessed battles and sieges.

Not every fort could be taken up for this work. This was perhaps not necessary also, for the forts discussed are more representative in character and honestly speaking those not finding place here should not be deemed to be in any way inferior for their romance, chivalry and bravery.

5. JAISALMER

'SONAR QUILA' or the golden fort produced by the eminent film-maker Satyajit Ray introduces the monument to resolve a mystery that appeals to the heart of young audiences. The Jaisalmer Fort which is his 'Sonar Quila' in fact does appear golden in hue and it is this, besides its architecture, that attracts visitors to this eight-centuries old fort.

The foundation of Jaisalmer was laid by Rawal Jaisal in 1156. Tod narrates how the town and the fort came to be built, Jaisal conspired with the Sultan of Gaur to dispossess his nephew Bhojdev from his territory Lodorva. In this he succeeded but he soon realised that Lodorva was not safe and that he should find some secure spot to locate his capital. While he was out in search of such a place on a rocky ridge, he met a hermit named Eesul who on learning of his purpose read to him an inscribed prophecy :

> 'Oh Prince of Jidoo-Vansa ! come into this land, and on this mountain's top erect a triangular castle. Lodorva is destroyed, but only five coss therefrom is Jesanoh, a site of twice its strength.
>
> Prince, whose name is Jesul, who will be of Yadu race abandon Lodorpoora ; here erect thy dwelling.'*

The Jaisalmer Fort is 1500 feet long and 750 feet wide at its greatest diameter and stands on a hill that overlooks the town from a height of about 250 feet from the surrounding country side. The base of the fort is surrounded by a wall of solid blocks of stone, about 15 feet above which the hill projects ramparts, forming a double line of defence. The bastions of the fort are in the form of half towers supporting battlements. These thus form a complete chain of defence about 30 feet above the hill.

The fort is approached by an entrance on the townside which has four gates but not all of them were cannon-mounted.

Of special interest in the fort are Maharawal's palace, temples and an imposing hill crowned by huge umbrellas of metal mounted on a stone shaft. Whereas the exteriors are so effective, the interior of the buildings has small appartments. The houses, built of stone and mortar, have beautiful fronts carved of yellow limestone which is easily chiselled.

The next important event of Jaisalmer Fort occurred in 1276 when its king Jetsi, apprehending an attack by the Sultan of Delhi, prepared the fort for defence.

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*Todd, J., *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*.

He laid in immense stores of grain and deposited stones all round to hurl on the besiegers. All the aged, infirm and ladies were removed to safety in the desert and the country for many miles around the capital was laid waste. The 56 bastions were manned by 3700 soldiers. The Rawal with his sons and warriors remained in the castle while his grandsons Deoraj and Hamir formed an army to fight against the enemy from without.

The Sultan's army laid siege for more than eight years. Finally the invaders destroyed the castle. Bhatis continued possession of the fort but they had no means for its repair. In 1306, for his bravery, Doodoo was elected as Rawal when they ejected the Rathors who were trying to settle at Jaisalmer. He started repairing the fort.

Just before Babur's invasion, the dependencies of Jaisalmer extended on the north to the Garah river, west to the Indus and on the east and west they were bounded by the kingdoms of Bikaner and Marwar. The Rawals could not withstand the aggressive designs of the Mughuls and in 1570 Rawal Har Rai submitted to Emperor Akbar and also gave him his daughter in marriage.

Subbul Singh who was the first prince of Jaisalmer held his dominions as a fief of the Mughul empire. With the accession of Maharawal Mulraj in 1762 its fortunes declined rapidly but owing to its isolated situation it escaped the ravages of the Marathas and was one of the last states in Rajputana to be taken under the protection of the British government. The treaty of 12 December 1818 between the East India Company and Maharawal Mulraj granted Mulraj succession for posterity and protection from series of invasions and dangers to his state. In 1829 when a Bikaner army invaded Jaisalmer, with the intervention of the British government and through the arbitration of the Maharana of Udaipur the dispute between the two was settled. Mulraj died in 1820 and his grandson Gaj Singh was proclaimed successor. The fort saw no more important event thereafter.

6. RANTHAMBHORE

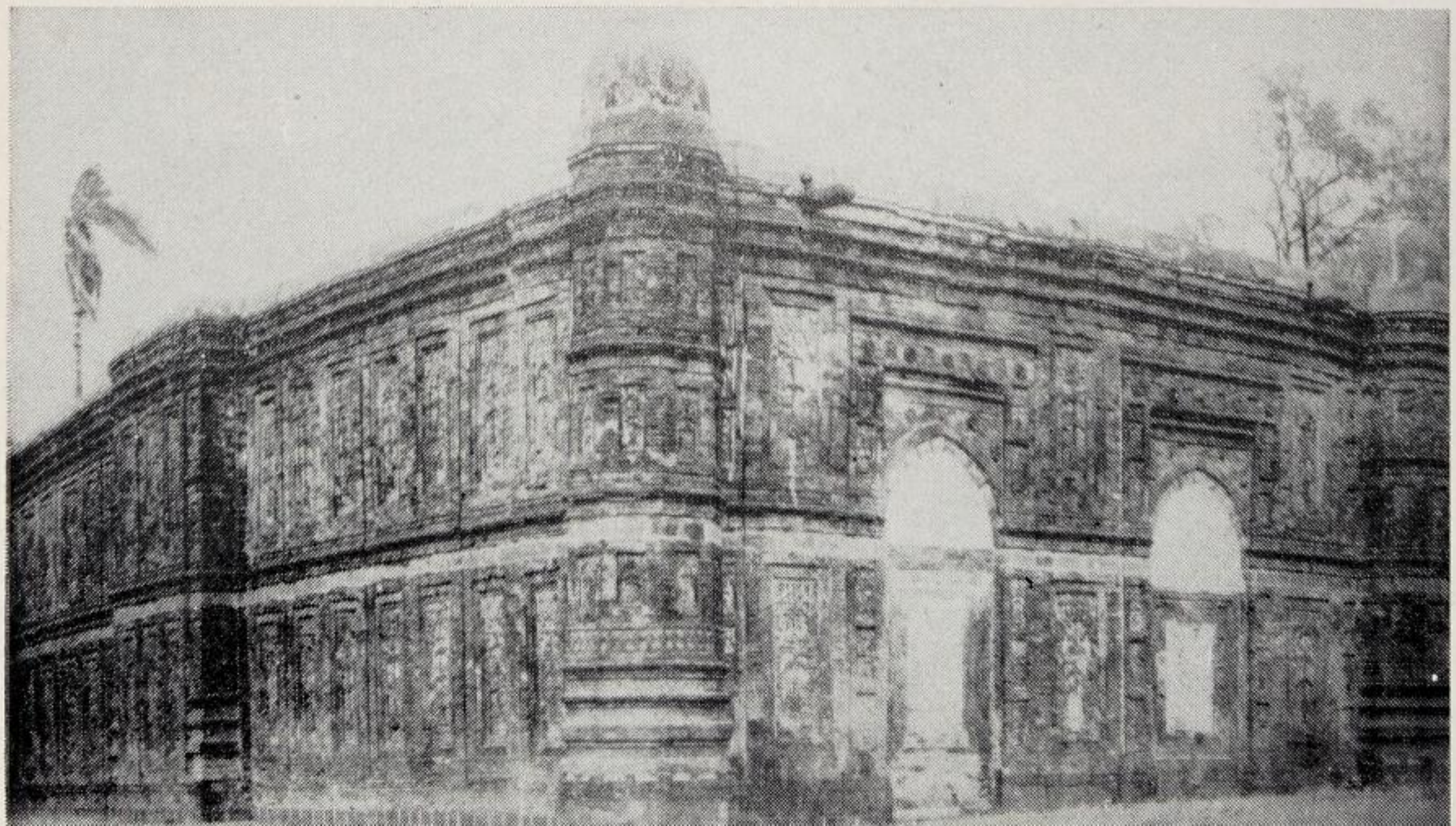
THE famous fort of Ranthambhore near Sawai Madhopur in Rajasthan, stands on an isolated rock 1578 feet above sea level and is surrounded by a massive wall strengthened by towers and bastions. The fortress witnessed many sieges and battles but today all that is there are the remains of a palace, a mosque, tomb of a saint and barracks for the garrison.

The fortress of Ranthambhore is said to have been constructed by Maharaja Jayant in the 5th century A.D. The Yadavas ruled over it till they were

Kalibangan. Salient of the citadel

Tughlaqabad Fort. Delhi

Ashoka's pillar at Ferozeshah Kotla, Delhi



Kalinjar Fort :
Third gateway s
broken and bulg

Purana Qila, Delhi

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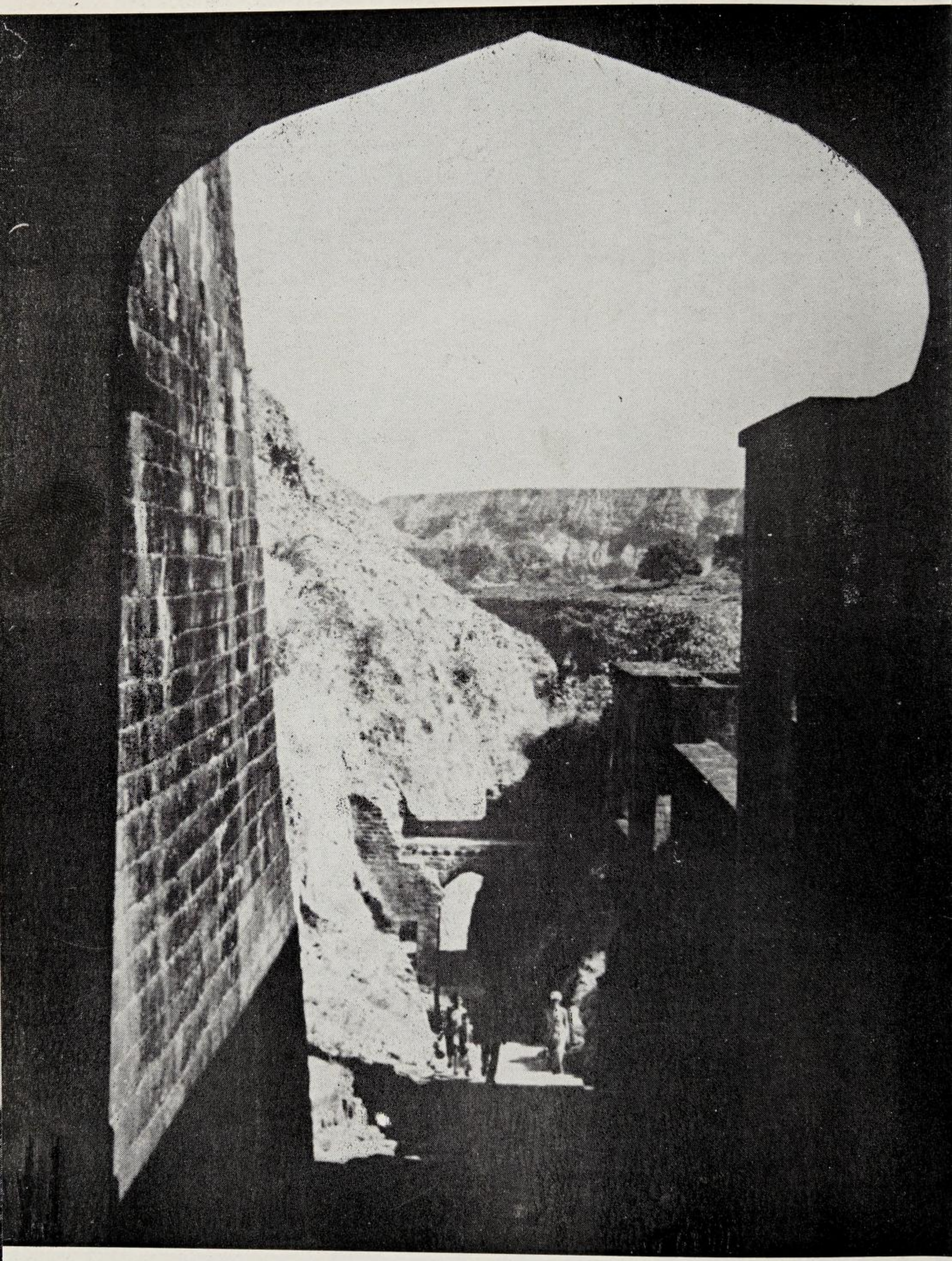

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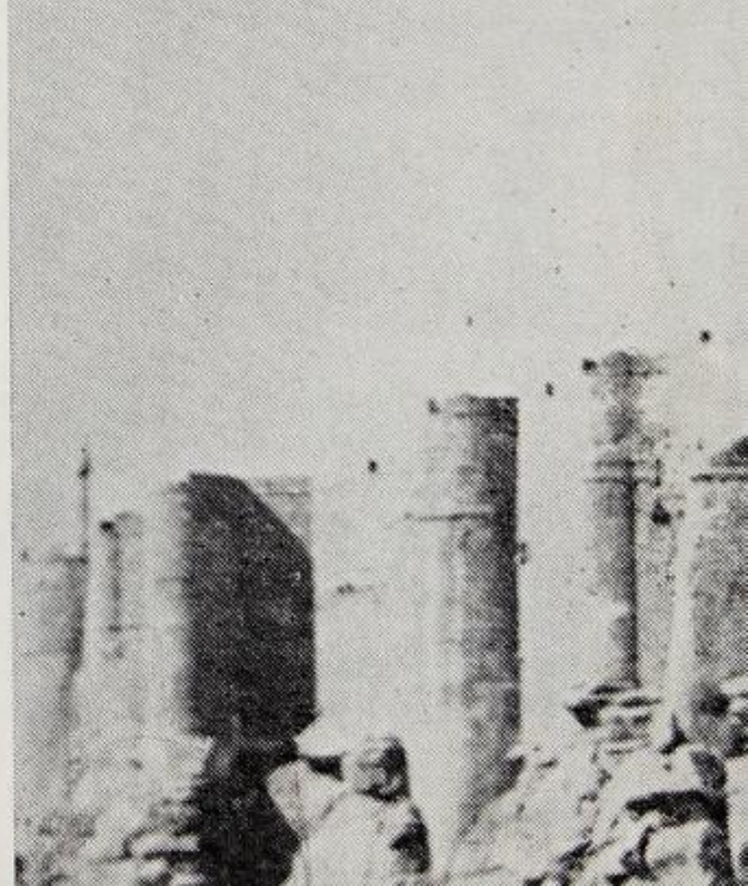
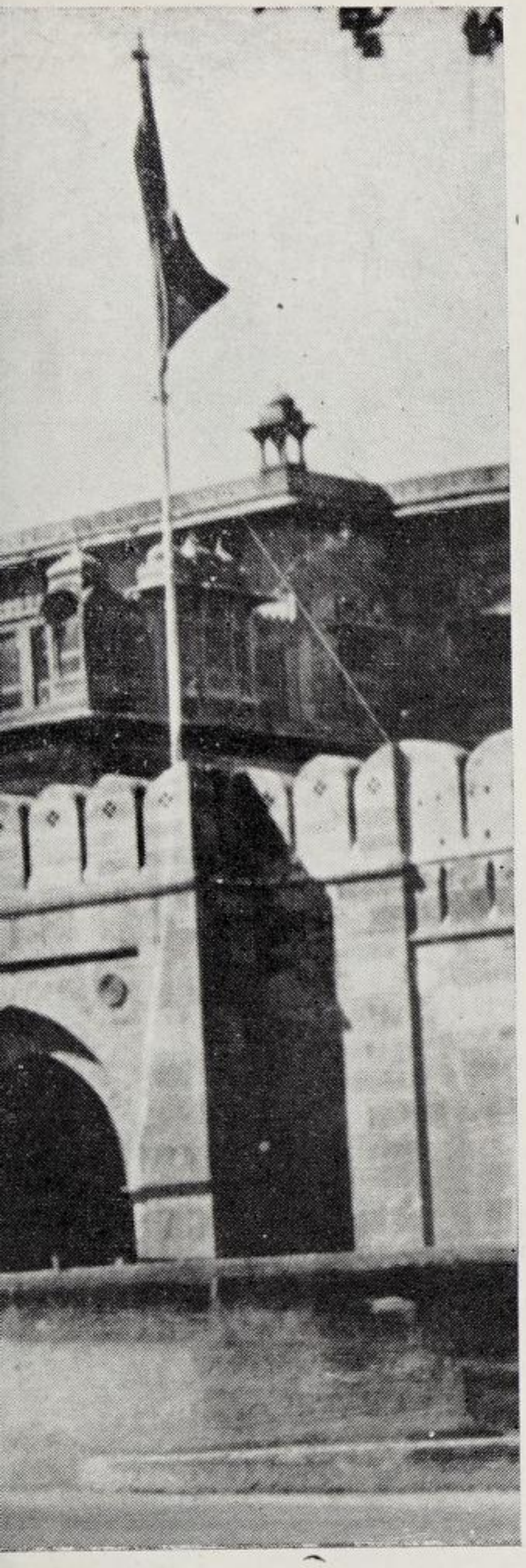
Kumbhalgarh : Fort walls

Bikaner Fort



Jodhpur Fort



Amber Fort, Jaipur
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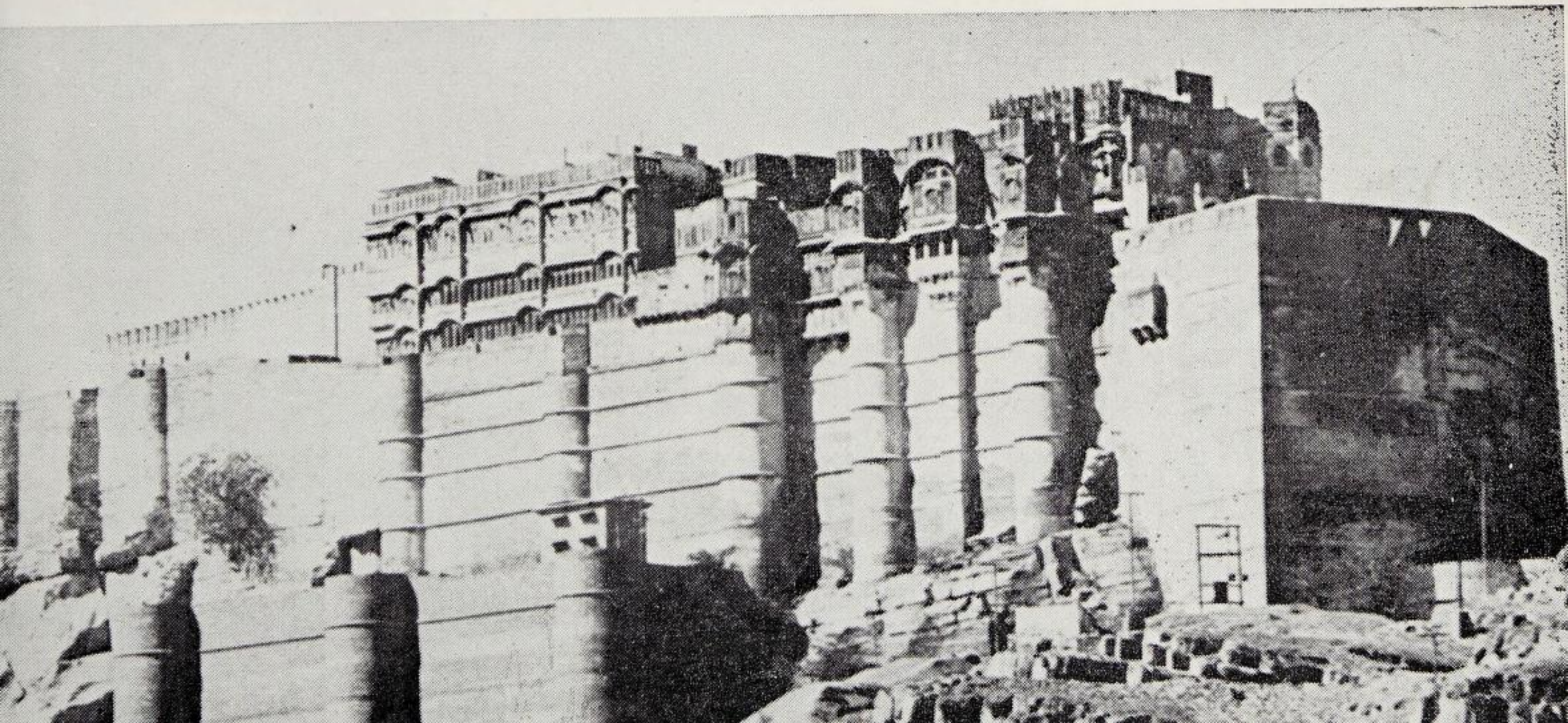

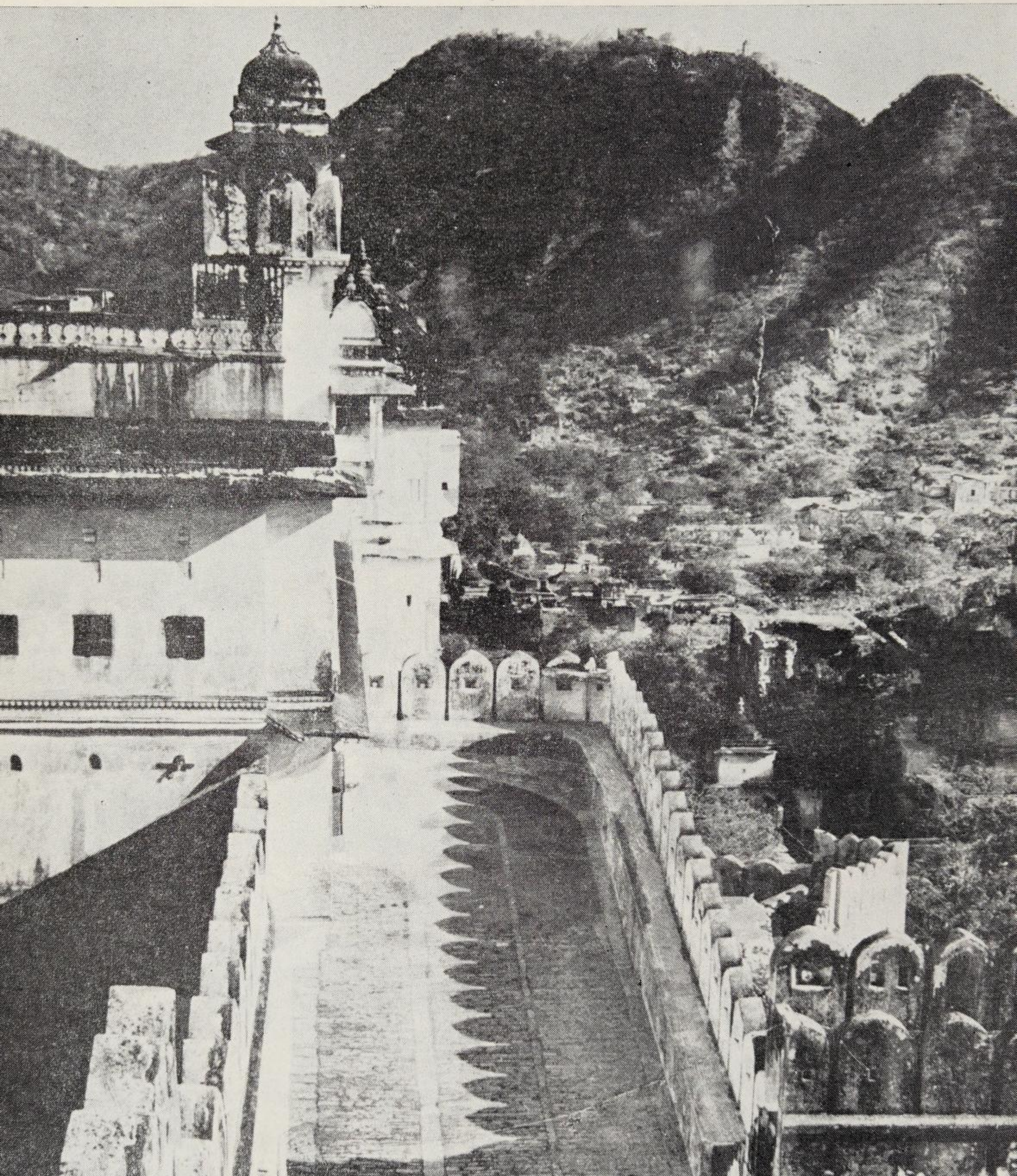

expelled by Prithviraj Chauhan in the 12th century. Govinda, Prithiviraj's grandson, established himself at Ranthambhore and ruled as a feudatory of the Delhi Sultanate. But Sultan Iltutmish coveted the fort. He got Govinda's descendant Viranarayana deceitfully killed and in 1226 Delhi's forces occupied the fortress. But he could not hold it for long. Viranarayana's uncle Vaghbhata who had escaped and taken refuge with the Sultan of Malwa was making efforts to capture the fort. The Sultan of Malwa also had an eye over the fortress and tried to assassinate Vaghbhata. Having come to know of his host's designs well in time, Vaghbhata himself slew the Sultan and founded a small principality on the borders of Malwa and the old kingdom of Ranthambhore. On Iltutmish's death when an opportunity arose, he marched on Ranthambhore and invested it so successfully that in the beleaguered fort 'water was regarded as milk, grass as sugarcane and fuel as sandal'. In less than three months 'the Sakas' fled away for their lives.

In 1248 Ulugh Khan (later on Balban) moved out to invade Ranthambhore but had to return discomfited to Delhi. After Balban's death for some time there was no one at Delhi to check the growth of the Chauhan state of Ranthambhore. In 1290 the Khaljis succeeded the Slave dynasty and the very first Khalji king Jalaluddin marched towards Ranthambhore and invested it in 1292. The Sultan ordered *manjaniks* to be erected, *sabats* to be built and the siege to be pressed with vigour. But Hamir Deo, the ruler of Ranthambhore defended it gallantly. He led out sorties so effectively that the Khalji army was thrown into utter confusion, forcing the Sultan to give up the idea of capturing Ranthambhore for the time being.

Jalaluddin's successor Ala-ud-din was, however, determined to take the fortress and in 1300 he sent an army under the command of Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan. Pretending that he wanted negotiations to be held, Ulugh Khan asked Hamir to surrender two fugitives, viz. Qamizi Mohammed Shah and Kamru who had taken shelter with him. He also asked him to give his daughter's hand. To these Hamir replied that he could not harm those to whom he gave protection and scornfully rejected the other demands. He put up a strong defence and provided for a day-and-night watch. He had big pans filled with boiling resinous oil and placed archers to man the defences of the fort. The Sultan's army tried to besiege the fort but found it difficult to push ahead. Hamir's *dhenkutis* threw stones on the besiegers. The besieged shot flaming arrows and foiled enemy attempts to mine and scale the walls of the fort. One day after about three months' siege a stone thrown by a *dhenkuti* hit the commander Nusrat Khan who sustained serious injuries and died, perhaps near the Navlakhi gate. This threw the Delhi forces in confusion and taking advantage of the situation Hamir marched out of the fort and gave battle to the invaders and defeated them. The invading army fell back on Jhain. When Ulugh Khan asked for further reinforcements Ala-ud-din, instead of sending

a new commander, himself marched with a large force. He pressed the siege of Ranthambhore with great vigour. Hamir led out sorties but this time he did not succeed in checking the enemy. He built *gargachs* (floating platforms) of a height good enough to command the interior of the fort. He also filled the moat with grass and wood. He had ropes woven in sacks which were filled with sand and thrown into the moat hoping this to reach the walls of the fort. But the Chauhans succeeded in throwing boiling oil on the enemy soldiers, destroyed the wood and also killed soldiers engaged in the construction of mines. Although the stores inside the fort were exhausted and there was famine, Hamir refused to surrender.

When the efforts proved futile, Ala-ud-din resorted to diplomacy. He offered the Rajput general Ratipal, who had come for preliminary negotiations that if he ever captured the fort, he would make it over to him. On return Ratipal, the traitor, told Hamir that Ala-ud din cared little for losses. He also succeeded in turning another commander Ranamalla against Hamir. The four Mongol chiefs and Hamir's brother could, however, not be bought. A little after sunset both the traitors got out of the fort and joined the enemy. Hamir put up a brave show but could not keep up false appearances. His queen and daughter Devaldevi performed *johar*. The gates of the fort were thrown open and Hamir fought well. But apprehending falling into the hands of his enemies, he left the crown to Joja Chauhan and killed himself. Joja continued resistance and the fort fell on 20 July 1301. The Chauhan garrison was put to sword and Ulugh Khan was made in-charge of the fort. Ratipal, Ranamalla and other traitors met the fate they deserved. Ratipal was flayed alive and Ranamalla was put to death for Ala-ud-din believed that those who had betrayed their masters will never be loyal to another. When he asked Mohammed Shah how he would behave if he ordered his wounds to be attended, the Mongol replied that if he recovered he would have the Sultan slain and raise Hamir's son to the throne. Angered by the answer Ala-ud-din had him trampled to death by an elephant but gave him a decent burial as he had appreciated the reply.

Ranthambhore remained under the rule of Delhi till about the close of the 14th century when during the destructions of Timur's invasion it was wrested. But it is mentioned that in 1516 it belonged to Malwa. Shortly afterwards it was taken by Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar, and in 1528 it came in possession of Babur. Twenty-five years later it was regained by Mewar. Although the fort of Ranthambhore belonged to the Maharana, it was garrisoned and commanded by Rao Surjan Singh Hada, the ruler of Bundi. In 1569 Akbar tried to take the fort by persuasion. When this failed he besieged it. Surjan Singh gave a stiff resistence for six months but eventually the fall appeared inevitable. Kunwar Mansingh of Amber suggested to Akbar that he might be permitted to employ a political stratagem. Akbar agreed to this and Mansingh sought an interview with Hada inside the fort.

Surjan Singh agreed and along with Akbar in disguise as attendant Mansingh went to meet Hada. Mansingh explained that further resistance would cause only bloodshed and it was impossible to avert capitulation of the fort. Mansingh's sincerity appealed to Hada who agreed to surrender, provided the conditions were honourable. The terms were immediately drafted and at Mansingh's gesture Akbar threw off his mask and signed the terms. Surjan Singh surrendered the fort In Akbar's reign Ranthambhore became the first *sarkar* (division) in the province of Ajmer.

On the decay of the Mughul empire towards the end of the 17th century, the fort of Ranthambhore, which had seen so many sieges, passed into the hands of the rulers of Jaipur.

7. CHITOR

THE famous fort of Chitor which was the pivot and chief seat of Rajput civilisation and is a monument of past glory stands on a solitary hill, lying almost north to south and about 500 feet above the surrounding plain. At a distance of about 110 km from Udaipur, it is about three and three quarters miles in length and a maximum half mile in width and covers an area of about 690 acres. The angle of ascent to its scarped summit is about 45° and the vertical scarps are crowned with the line of battlement which makes reach to it difficult. The fort stands out dominantly alone except for one small hill known as Chitori which is a point of vantage against the southern bastion of the fortress. The entire formation is favourable for retaining the rainfall, and storing water in a number of *kunds* (tanks). Chitor presents to the modern eye the appearance of a vast ironclad in sea which is represented by the plain from which the fortified hill rises.

The fort has three main gates, namely the Rampol on the west, the Surajpol in the east, and the Lakhota Bari on the north; the principal approach from the town is through the Rampol. One of the most ancient buildings is the Kirti Stambha or the Tower of Fame which was erected by a Bagherwal Mahajan. Another prominent monument is the nine-storey Jai Stambha, the Pillar of Victory, 120 feet × 30 feet, constructed by Rana Kumbha. A staircase passes through the nine storeys, winding alternately through a central well and a gallery. The whole fort is covered with figures or achitectural scrolls and foliage. Among other buildings worth mention are Singar Chaori (a graceful and richly carved little temple) constructed in 1448, Kalka Mata Temple—the oldest building in the fort, and a few votive Buddhist stupas.

Tradition ascribes that Bhima, one of the Pandava brothers, wagered with a

yogi that he could build a fort overnight ; which he would have done but for a trick played by the latter. Sparing the reader of this myth, one could talk of the historical fact that Chitor was fortified by Chitranga, a Mor Rajput (a clan of Parmars), whose successor Mansingh was ousted in 734 by Bapa Rawal, a Guhilot prince of Nagada (near Udaipur). Rawal's sixth successor drove off from Chitor an army of Al Mamun, Khalifa of Baghdad, that invaded the fort. After a few generations the family split into two branches—Rawal which ruled from Chitor and Rana which ruled from Sishoda and came to be known as Sishodia.

King Samar Singh had to contend with Hamir of Ranthambhore and Ala-ud-din Khalji. In 1285 he released Gujarat from Muslim rule ; and in 1299 defeated Ulugh Khan Khalji who was marching towards Gujarat. His successor Ratan Singh who sat on the throne in 1302 had to face an assault by Ala-ud-din. The Rajputs gave a tough resistance and the Sultan failed in his mission. But he continued to invest the fort for seven months. It is said that he had invaded Chitor, to capture Ratan Singh's queen Padmini of whose beauty he had heard. In the battle Ratan Singh was killed and Padmini and other Ranis committed *johar*. But the Rajputs did not surrender. Finally they rushed out in Kesaria and 30,000 of them were killed.

After capturing Chitor, Ala-ud-din entrusted its rule to his eldest son Khizr Khan and renamed the place Khizrabad. But within a decade the conditions at Delhi deteriorated and

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Note. Padmini is a legend for having preferred heroic death to disgraced existence. Jayasee, the Muslim poet, developed the incident of Ala-ud-din Khalji's invasion of Chitor and his attempt to capture Padmini. The Khalji Sultan failed in taking the fort. He conveyed to the Rana that he would return to Delhi, his capital, if he could only see Padmini's reflection in a mirror. To this Rana agreed and Ala-ud-din saw Padmini's reflection in a mirror inside the fort. But when Ala-ud-din was being seen off by the Rana at the gate, he imprisoned Rana and took him to Delhi. Ala-ud-din sent a Royal order that he would release Rana if Padmini was surrendered. Padmini conferred with Gora and Badal, two warriors, and left for Delhi fully armed with Rajput warriors in 1600 litters. It was given out that Padmini was going to the royal palace with her maids. On reaching Delhi, the party asked the Sultan to favour Padmini by giving her an opportunity to have a last interview with the Rana. This was granted and the palanquins entered the place where Ratan Singh was staying. Rescuing Ratan Singh from the prison, the party took the road to Chitor, escorted by Rajputs under Badal. Gora engaged royalists and checked their movement and although he was killed this gave the Rana's party time to reach Chitor The Rana now punished Devapala of Kumbhalgarh who had earlier tried to seduce Padmini. The Rana was wounded in the battle and some time afterwards died. Padmini and Nagmati, another queen, performed Sati.

Col. Tod on the other hand closes the story with the siege of Chitor. Before the final surrender of the citadel by the Rajputs, the brave Rajput women, led by Padmini, plunged themselves into the fire of *johar*.

Khizr Khan had to leave after entrusting Chitor to Maldeo Sonagra on the condition that he would pay tribute to Delhi and serve the Sultan with a fixed number of horsemen According to Nainsi, Maldeo governed Chitor for seven years (1314-21) during which period the Tughluqs replaced the Khaljis which did not make any material change and Maldeo and his son Saisa ruled Chitor in a subordinate capacity.

In 1326 Maldeo married his daughter to Hamir, grandson of Lakshman Singh. With the help of his wife Hamir recovered Chitor. He conquered and added many territories to his kingdom. He defeated the Ghori, the first Sultan of Malwa. After a century the days of glory of Chitor returned under Maharana Kumbha who defeated the combined forces of Malwa and Gujarat, and to commemorate his victory over Malwa erected the Jai Stambha.

Another outstanding king of Chitor was Rana Sanga in whose reign Mewar reached the summit of its prosperity. In 1527 Sanga gave Babur a tough battle but he lost. He was succeeded by Bhojraj, Ratan Singh II and Vikramaditya, the last one being much harassed by Bahadur Shah, Sultan of Gujarat. When the Sultan besieged the fort of Chitor the queen mother of Mewar, Rani Karnavati, asked for help from Humayun but the latter paid no heed to her appeal. The besieged ladies at Chitor committed *johar* and the remnants of the forces hurled themselves to death. In the confusion that ensued Vikramaditya seized the opportunity and regained his kingdom.

In October 1567 Chitor was besieged by Akbar and the emperor himself reconnoitred the fortress and assigned to each division of the army its sector of the lines of investment. Rana Uday Singh left for Kumbhalgarh entrusting the defence of Chitor to Jai Mal.

Akbar had three batteries constructed, the principal one being opposite the Lakhota gate. It was found that directing guns on the whole was difficult and Akbar therefore caused a large mortar to be cast. It was capable of throwing a ball 40 pounds in weight. The imperial troops suffered about 200 dead under direct shots. Akbar resolved to rely chiefly on mines and covered ways to approaches. On 17 December two mines were fired but the storming party rushed into the place before the second exploded, killing many people.

On the night of 23 February 1568, while a party of defenders was making sortie, a leader was seen at a loophole directing the operation. Akbar fired a shot which had fatal effect. During the night flames broke out at various places in the fortress which, Raja Bhagwan Das informed Akbar was the rite of *johar*. It was discovered that Akbar's victim was Jai Mal who was the leader of the defenders.

After Jai Mal the command devolved on Patta Singh of Kailwa who put on yellow robe. The imperial troops entered the fortress after dawn. It was a terrible fight. On Akbar's orders 30,000 people were massacred. The bravery of Jai Mal and Patta Singh was appreciated by Akbar who erected

their statues mounted on elephants, at the gate of his imperial palace at Agra. After Uday Singh's death, Pratap succeeded as Maharana and meditated the recovery of Chitor. He fought many battles against the Mughuls and carried on his fight single-handed. In the end he succeeded in recovering most of his territory. He died in 1597

Akbar was succeeded by Jahangir and Rana Pratap by Amar Singh. The Rana defeated Mughul forces twice Jahangir then sent a force under Khurram (Shahjahan) in 1613. Recognizing that his position was untenable Rana offered to recognise Mughul supremacy on the condition that he and his successors would be exempt from personal attendance. Jahangir accepted the submission but decided that Chitor should never again be fortified. Shahjahan in 1654 sent Sadulla with a strong force to destroy the fortifications which the Rana of Udaipur had constructed at Chitor. Under Aurangazeb's orders Hasan Ali Khan marched with 7000 troops in 1680. The Rajputs could not stand against the Mughul artillery and the latter succeeded in taking possession of Chitor. Akbar was left with a strong force in Chitor. But the scorch earth warfare of the Rajputs reduced them to starvation. The emperor then placed the command of the army at Chitor under Prince Azam.

In 1817 the British government resolved to extend their initial protection over the states. Bheemsingh concluded a treaty in 1818 by which the British government agreed to protect Udaipur. Captain Tod was the first political agent and he contributed a good deal to popularise the heroic deeds of the Rajputs.

8. KUMBHALGARH

KUMBHALGARH, situated on a high peak of the westerly range of Aravalli Hills, on the borders of Mewar and Marwar, is a stupendous monument of the military and constructive genius of Maharana Kumbha. In later times his successors repaired to this fortress whenever they found Udaipur unsafe and Chitor untenable.

There are a number of gates on the approaches to the fort. The first gate is Aretpol which serves as a barrier. This is followed by Hullapol, Hanumanpol, Vijaypol and Rampol. From Rampol starts the strong high walls and beyond it is the fort proper. But on the road from Rampol to the main wall there are five gates—Bhairavpol, Neebupol, Chauganpol, Pakhadapol and Ganeshpol. Thus several gateways with winding approach and a series of walls with battlements and bastions provide ample defence. The surrounding battlemented wall is very thick and allows eight horsemen to ride abreast at a time. The formidable bastions in the battlemented wall of the fortifications are peculiar in shape and are so built that the enemy cannot scale them by means of ladders.

According to tradition, Kumbhalgarh, known as Machindrapur, was built centuries ago by a Jain king Samprati. Mahmud Khalji laid a siege in 1442, but the fort proved invincible. As a safe-

guard for future, Maharana Kumbha erected fortifications. The reconstruction started in 1443 and was completed in A.D. 1458. It appears that Kumbha gave it the name of Kumbhalmer which came to be popularly known as Kumbhalgarh.

Ahmed Shah of Gujarat also attacked but realised the futility of storming the fort. Sultan Qutbuddin of Gujarat also marched against Kumbhalgarh in 1457 and besieged Kumbhalgarh, but when considerable time lapsed he gave up the siege. However, in the misaprehension that the deity of the temple Banmata situated near the fort protected the fortifications, he destroyed the temple. Later attempts by Mahmud Khalji in 1458-59 and 1467 also proved abortive He suffered heavy losses and returned to his capital.

Kumbhalgarh is said to have been taken by Shahbaz Khan, Akbar's general, in 1576.

In 1818 an armed band of Sanyasins who had formed a garrison were pacified by Tod, the then political agent and the fort was taken over and restored by him to the Marathas.

The Maharanas of Mewar constructed buildings in the fort. The main structure however remained as it was built by Maharana Kumbha. The residential buildings inside the fort are simple in construction but these were well provided with necessary accessories like store-houses, waterways for the inmates as also for withstanding sieges. Kumbhalgarh also contains quite a number of temples.

Kumbhalgarh stands as a true representative of medieval Indian military architecture and an enduring contribution of the scholar king Maharana Kumbha. Here one may really see the individuality of architecture in combining technique with environment but without sacrificing the aesthetics.

9. JODHPUR

ON an auspicious hour of 13 May 1459 Rao Jodha Singh laid the foundation of a fort and also commenced construction of the city which came to be known after him as Jodhpur Fort and Jodhpur city, respectively. And, following the tradition, a person named Rajiya Bhati was buried alive in the foundation in the superstitious belief that such a course enhances longevity of the fort. But the grants of land to the family of the deceased would have in no way compensated their loss.

The fort which stands on a hill which is 400 feet in height, about 500 yards in length and about 250 yards in breadth, has an area of about two quare miles It is encircled by a 24,600 feet long, three to nine feet thick and 15 to 30 feet high massive wall which is further strengthened in many places by towers, buttresses and

ramparts having loopholes and bastions for defence.

The fort has six gates, viz. Jalor, Hasta, Nagaur, Siwana, Sojat and Chandpol with sharp spikes to protect them from ramming by elephants. There was also a seventh gate which was weak. There are two entrances Fatehpol and Jaipol. The former was built by Maharaja Ajit Singh shortly after Aurangazeb's death in 1707 and the latter by Maharaja Man Singh about a hundred years later. The door of the Fatehpol is said to have been brought from Ahmedabad by the Thakur of Nimach in or about 1731.

The principal buildings, in the fort are a series of apartments and palaces. The Moti Mahal was built by Sawai Raja Sur Singh and additions to it were made by Maharaja Takhat Singh. The Fateh Mahal was built by Maharaja Ajit Singh to commemorate the explosion of Mughul garrison in 1708. These buildings are decorated with beautifully carved panels and pierced screens of red stone and some of the ceilings and walls possess fresco paintings. Each prince has left memories of his style of architecture.

There are two small lakes, viz. Rani Talab to the east and Gulab Sagar to the South from which the garrison used to draw water. There is a *kund* or reservoir about 90 feet deep, besides two wells also existed. The one within the citadel was called Patiala and the other was Chaukiloo.

The largest and most powerful guns are styled Kilkila, Shambhubhan and Ghazni Khan. The first one was brought by Ajit Singh from Ahmedabad, the second one was taken from Sarbar Khan and the third one was seized by Maharaja after the victory of Jalore in 1607. It is said that the Ghazni Khan was cast by a French.

Maldev, one of the most valiant and energetic Rajputs of his times (16th century) erected fortifications to retain his conquest. He enclosed Jodhpur with a strong wall besides building a palace and other works in the citadel, embellished strongholds of Marwar and completed the fortifications of Jodhpur.

On Jaswant Singh's death in 1678 Aurangazeb annexed Marwar to his empire and refused to recognise Jaswant Singh's posthumous son Ajit Singh as successor to the Jodhpur state. The Rathors at this time had a worthy leader in Durgadas, son of Minister Askaran, who did not permit the emperor's design to succeed. Before Aurangazeb's army could lay its hands on Ajit Singh, Durgadas took him to Jodhpur. Aurangazeb invaded with his forces and captured and pillaged Jodhpur.

In fact the towers near the Nawali Gate show marks of gunning holes left by the armies of Jaipur and Bikaner who, with the aid of Amir Khan in 1806, marched to Jodhpur in support of the pretender Dhonkhan Singh against Man Singh.

10. BIKANER

RAO BIKA, the founder of the Rathore principality of Bikaner in Rajasthan, built the fort in 1485 and the city three years later in 1488. According to Tod, a Jit who had the hereditary right on the spot selected by Bika for his capital, said that he would concede it only if his name was associated in perpetuity with the fort. Naira or Nera was the name of the proprietor, which Bika added to his own : thus the name became Bikaner (Bika+Ner).

The fort, on an elevation of about 730 feet above sea level, is surrounded by a stone wall four and a half miles in circuit, and is six feet high and two feet thick. It has five gates, namely Kot, Jassusar, Nathusar, Silla and Goga, and eight sally ports. A ditch 15 feet deep and 20 in breadth surrounds it on three sides only. When Bika was away, he left Napo, the Lankha chief, in charge of the fort of Bikaner. In 1537 during Rao Jaitsi's period the Mughuls under Kamran, marched on Bikaner and demanded not only overlordship but also payment of a large sum as tribute. Upon this Rao Jaitsi became indignant and sent back the messenger. Next morning the Mughul army surrounded the fort but the Rao attacked them in the night and completely routed them. At day break, the remnants of the Mughul hordes were seen fleeing for their lives. In fact Kamran retreated in such a hurry that he did not stop even to pick up his umbrella which he had dropped at Chrotriya.

Bikaner subsequently developed good relations with the Mughuls as it needed protection from the invasion of Jodhpur. In 1541 when Maldeo, chief of Jodhpur, invaded Bikaner and captured the fort Jai Singh fled. But three years later Rawat Kishan Singh, a noble of Bikaner, not only took possession of the *thanas* set up by Maldeo but also captured the fort. He proclaimed Kalyanmal as the governor.

This led the rulers of Bikaner to become mansabdar (noble holding a military rank) of the Mughul court and the Raja gave the emperor Akbar his daughter in marriage. The great influence that Rai Singh exercised at the Mughul court can be inferred from an incident that took place at the time of Akbar's death. There were intrigues to place Khusro on the throne. It was then that Jahangir looked upon Rai Singh and sought his assistance.

After almost 100 years the foundation of the present fort of Bikaner was laid on 30 January 1586 in accordance with Raja Rai Singh's instructions from Burhanpur where he had gone, according to Khyats, to his minister Karam Chand.

The Bikaner Fort proper is situated about 300 yards from the Kot gate. It is 1,078 yards in circuit, and has two entrances, each with three or four successive gates. Its ramparts are strengthened by numerous bastions about forty feet high, and a moat running all round in a direction parallel to the curtains without following the curve of the bastions. The moat is 30 feet wide at the top but narrows at the bottom and is from 20 to 25 feet deep.

The fort was besieged many times but was never taken, though the old fort once was

In 1739 Jodhpur invaded Bikaner twice. The first attack came to nothing but the second was successful. The capital was taken and plundered. But the fort, though invested, could not be taken even after three months and five days and the siege had to be raised by Abhai Singh as he had to leave to look after his own territory which had been attacked by the Jaipur troops on an urgent request by the besieged.

When the Mughul empire started declining, the political links between the two powers became loose. And then the rulers of Bikaner looked towards the English for alliance as they felt uneasy at the lawlessness, and in 1808 Maharaja Surat Singh even offered the keys of the fort to Elphinston as a token of his allegiance, though the latter declined to accept these. But then Bikaner entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British government. During the uprise of 1857, the Bikaner garrison repulsed the attack on the city and defeated the rebels.

The Bikaner Fort can boast of many architectural specialities which remind one of Fatehpur Sikri and the Red Fort of Delhi. It is built according to military standards of that time. The carved wooden door leading to Hari Mandir closely resembles what was called Akbari door. Sur mandir, Sur tank are representations of the Mughul architecture of Akbar's time. Anup Singh's Mahal with its golden penwork is an exquisite piece of work. Karan Mahal is on the pattern of and served the purpose that Darbar Hall in the Red Fort of Agra or Delhi did.

The palace buildings are works of successive Rajas. Important ones amongst these are : the Chaubara erected by Raja Rai Singh, the Phul Mahal, the Chandra Mahal, the Gaj Mandir, Anup Mahal which is perhaps the best of all dating from the time of Maharaja Surat Singh, the Chhatar Mahal, the Chini Burj and the Ganga Niwas.

11. AMBER

THE Amber Fort near Jaipur is situated on the summit of a hill that commanded the regions lying to the north and south and the narrow passage which joins these two. Its powerful and extensive walls and towers enabled its rulers to prepare themselves for defence from inside.

The palace of Amber was built by Raja Mansingh in 1600. To this Mirza Raja Jaisingh made several outstanding additions. The edifice built by Sawai Jai Singh, residence of the Kachhwaha princes, further added to its glamour and placed it beside the celebrated forts of Gwalior, Bundi and Udaipur. In 1728 he laid the foundation of Jaipur and connected it to the ancient castle of Amber. The Amber fort has entrances known as Suraj Pol, Chand Pol, Singh Pol and Ganesh Pol. About the buildings of Amber, Percy Brown writes: 'Two halls within the large square are prominent. The Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas clearly depicted the influence of Mughul court, particularly the Diwan-i-Am. Its double wall pillars, clusters of brackets, wide caves and high perforated parapet above, being reminiscent of the pavilion known as the Zenana Palace of Allahabad; the example at Amber having been most probably executed by masons trained in the Akbari style by Mughul overseers.' The hanging balconies, the long verandah and elaborate carved brackets are interesting features of the palace. Its corridors leading to rooms were designed after Mughul pattern. Its terrace provides cool air and the court halls display impact of Mughul architecture on the buildings of Amber. All these constitute a kind of synthesis between Mughul and Rajput art.

The town Amber has taken its name from Ambrish, the son of Mandhata who was king of Ayodhya. Its full name is said to have been Ambarikhanera, which gradually contracted to Amber or Ambiner. The oldest inscription found here is dated about A.D. 954.

Amber originally belonged to the Minas. In the middle of 12th century whenever a Mina chief grew strong, he would sally forth from his citadel and attack Kakil Deo, son and successor of Dulha Rai, the founder of the Kachhwaha kingdom of Dhundhar. The latter therefore felt insecure in his own territories and when he got an opportunity made a surprise assault. He shifted his capital from Khoh to Amber, fortified its walls and dedicated a temple to Ambikeshwar Mahadev.

From 1290-1310 Rajdev further completed the fortifications of Amber which were commenced by his ancestors, built tanks, founded a town and fortified it with strong walls. His great grandson Pejavan, a contemporary of

Prithviraj Chauhan, the immortalised hero of Chand Bardai, contracted a marriage alliance with the sister or probably the cousin of Prithviraj and fought with remarkable dash and bravery in the first Battle of Tarain in 1191. Raso ranks him as the bravest and most valiant among the warriors of Prithviraj. His successors enjoyed peace and prosperity for twelve generations and they carved out small principalities for themselves until the rise of the Mughuls. Bharmall adopted the policy of conciliation and submission by matrimonial alliance with Akbar. His descendants dominated the Mughuls as *mansabdar*, administrator, diplomat. They earned name and fame everywhere.

Jaisingh served under three Mughul emperors namely Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangazeb. Sawai Jai Singh II was the most remarkable Kachhwaha ruler.

When Marathas combined with other Rajput chiefs entered Jaipur, they completely devastated the city by plunder. Ishwari Singh fully knowing the strong position of the enemy was prepared to meet them in a battle like a true and brave Rajput. The popular feelings of resentment exploded the entire city in the form of revolt against the Marathas. For nine hours, from noon to late in the night, citizens continued to attack the Marathas. Some 1500 Marathas including high officials, Brahmins, slave girls, even small children were slain. The Marathas, realising there was no other way, left Jaipur. Jagat Singh entered into protective alliance with the East India Company.

Forts of Gujarat

DURING the Rajput period adequate attention was given to fortification. Forts were called by different names depending on their location etc, e.g. Sivir, Vahinimukha, Sthariya, Samviddha, Kolaka, Nigama and Sikandharva. Forts were of various types, e.g. Vanadurga, Salilidurga, Parighadurga, Pankjadurga, Dhannadurga, Sahayadurga, Sainyadurga. Some basic rules about construction of forts were laid. In shape they could be circular, square, rectangular; they were to be surrounded by moats, enclosing walls and ramparts, furnished with gates, circumambulating flights of steps and secret staircases in the interior.

In a fortified city there were to be roads and buildings for different professions, and provision for secret entrance and exit had also to be made. It was to be ensured that the forts should withstand siege for a long time, be built in strategic places, possess natural strength, be inaccessible, have high and thick walls so that they could not be breached by cannon-balls or escalated by infantry and should have enough provisions and water.

12. DABHOI

THERE are different stories about the foundation of Dabhoi (Durbhavati in Sanskrit), a fortress of considerable importance about 25 km from Baroda in Gujarat. One legend says that many centuries ago a king of Patan named Sadana Jaisingh had seven wives, amongst whom Ratanben was his favourite. He was dismayed that she failed to give him a son. She then went on a pilgrimage to the Narmada. When she was about ten miles from the place she halted in a grove where a holy Gosain told her that in a few days she would give birth to a male child. This came true. A child of twenty months was born to her who was named Vishaldev. The enchanted king permitted his queen to remain in the grove and ordered that a city surrounded by strong fortifications be built there and beautified with decorations. Many architects were employed and it took them 22 years to complete the city. The chief among the architects sought for and obtained the reward that the town be named Dubhowey after him.

On the other hand bardic traditions tell us that the town of Vishalnagar and the fortress of Durbhavati were founded, rather repaired, by Vishaldev.

Ali Muhammad Khan ascribes the foundation of the forts of Bharoch and Dabhoi to Sidh Raj who reigned Patan from 1093 to 1142. This appears doubtful though he no doubt helped the city flourish.

In the time of Solanki kings of Gujarat, Dabhoi and Jhunjuwada were sister fortresses, similar in construction to an extent. However, Dabhoi was less regular. Its walls, 50 feet high and 1025, 900, 1100 and 1025 yards long with a round tower at each angle, were ornamented with sculptured horizontal bands.

According to Rasmala, Dabhoi had four gates, viz. Baroda Gate, Chandod or Nanded Gate, Champanir Gate and Diamond (Heera) Gate. The gateways were also covered with a profusion of sculptured ornaments.

The story of Diamond Gate goes something like this; after the gate was ready the king did not want the architect to construct anything better than what he had done so far. He ordered the architect to be buried alive, but the architect's wife somehow managed to keep him alive. Six years later the king had reason to deplore the loss of his architect, whereupon the latter was, as it were, exhumed a little worn out but ready to turn his hand to the next job.

Outside the Diamond Gate there is a tomb of some celebrity on which is fixed an upright slab with a circular aperture which discriminates between thieves

and honest men. Whereas the stoutest man unjustly charged with theft can creep through it with ease, the thinnest culprit will get stuck.

In proposition of architecture and elegance of sculpture, the Diamond Gate is superb. This beautiful pile extends 320 feet in length with proportionate height. Rows of elephants, roughly caparisoned, support the massive fabrics. The architraves and borders round the compartments of figures are very elegant and groups of warriors are seen performing martial exercises on horse-back or foot or elephants. The magnificent gate has disappeared partly through neglect and partly through ravages of the ruler's bigotry.

Champanir Gate is graceful and perfect. Besides a Kalika temple, a Mahadev temple is also impressive. The Kalika Mata Temple has a passage leading a distance of 16 miles to Pavangarh.

At the end of 13th century, Gujarat was overrun by the forces of Ala-ud-din Khalji, emperor of Delhi. Later Sultan Mohammad bin Tughluq appointed Mughil as governor of Gujarat to liquidate troublesome elements of Afghans, such as Ghazi Jalal and his followers. But in a battle that took place in Dabhoi, Mughil was decisively beaten. He escaped with great difficulty and crept back to his refuge, the fort of Patan.

There is a reference that in his expedition to Deccan on 6 September 1529 Bahadur Shah, king of Gujarat, left Muhammadabad (Champanir) and encamped at Dabhoi. Thence upto 1725 Dabhoi remained in the possession of Muslim rulers.

In 1725 Senapati established himself at Dabhoi and made it his regular head-quarters. Two years later Pilagi, Senapati's servant, took over Dabhoi from his master.

In 1775, half-drowned British troops sought shelter behind the venerable walls of Dabhoi while the Marathas camped at Bilahapur near Baroda. In this war between the Peshwa and the British, Fateh Singh sided with the latter.

In December 1779 Col. Goddard joined the Bombay force with the Bengal army and took possession of Dabhoi which was held by 2000 of the Peshwa troops. On 29 February 1780 Holkar and Scindia, the Peshwa's allies, encamped near Dabhoi. Between 1775 and 1787 it was occupied by British troops.

On July 1817 the Bombay Government considered Dabhoi as the bone of contention between Gaikwad and Peshwa and proposed that Dabhoi along with two other places be exchanged for the Parganas of Viramgam and the Panch Mahal which were leased to the Baroda state by the Peshwa. Dabhoi was valued at Rs 2,07,918.

Of the walls, the western and a part of the northern side alone show what the original fortifications were like. A very small portion of the internal colonnade remains. The neglect and general pilfering have done the walls much harm. The north-west bastion and south-west tower are in fairly good condition.

13. CHAMPANIR

THE fortress of Champanir set on a formidable, deeply scrapped rock, 25 miles from Baroda, derives its name from its founder, Jamb or Champa, the brilliant and gallant minister of King Wun Raj of Chowra dynasty that ruled in the eighth century. The fortress is also known as Pawan-garh or Pavagarh ('The Castle of Winds'—*pawan* meaning wind which continuously blew and blasted it.). The continuous steep ascent is its main natural defence which from the plains looks artificial. The original fortifications were later replaced by a citadel built on a rectangular plain, which is three quarters mile long and 280 yards broad with strong walls constructed from light brown sandstone and strengthened by bastions at regular intervals.

How Champanir passed into the possession of the Chauhans is not known. All that we know is that the Chauhans took it in A.D. 1300 and it remained in their possession for about two centuries. Champanir withstood attacks of Ahmad Shah and Muhammad Shah. Mahmud Begarha the next ambitious Sultan of Ahmedabad, was determined to conquer it and become an undisputed sovereign of Gujarat. His contemporary, Raja Jai Singh of Champanir was equally determined to retain his freedom. In the beginning Jai Singh sallied fiercely and devastated the territories of Mahmud Begarha. In retaliation, Mahmud sent a large force against Champanir. The Rajputs after initial resistance retreated into the fort with the idea of conducting a defensive war and leaving the Sultan with the only alternative of besieging the formidable rock. In March 1483 the Sultan's advance party could be seen near the fort of Champanir. Perturbed over the presence of the enemy force in his own territory, Raja Jai Singh made offers of submission but these were not agreed to.

Ferista says that Raja Jai Singh collected as many as sixty thousand troops and set the fortress in order to meet the challenge. Certainly the Rajputs in the fort were in an advantageous position to attack the besiegers from ths top of the hill. The Sultan refrained for some time from taking any hasty step. He took a round, examined weak points of the fort and encamped at Girnar. Jai Singh again asked for peace by offering nine maunds of gold and food grains but Mahmud not only rejected the offer but also conveyed to Jai Singh's envoys his decision to annex Champanir.

The desperate Raja then sought the help of Mahmud Khalji of Malwa who turned up and for a while made the position of Mahmud Begarha a little shaky, but he returned in the cause

of Islam, leaving Jai Singh to fight his battle. On the other hand, Begarha gave orders for the construction of Jami Masjid, thereby showing that he was determined to take Champanir. He pressed the siege more vigorously, ignoring the fact that the Rajputs cut off Begarha's convoy of provisions and stores. Jai Singh's mother suggested that he better surrender the fort but the Raja paid no heed to it as he had full confidence that he would be able to give a tough battle. Then, unexpectedly, the besieger discovered the sally-post through which the Rajputs used to pass each morning to perform their ablutions and he succeeded in effecting a breach in the western wall. On 17 November 1484 the sally-post was sieged by Begarha's men and Malik Eiaz Sultan escaladed the western wall. The Rajputs made a desperate attempt to expel him but without success. Mahmud Shah personally supported Malik with fresh troops. A shell fell upon the Raja's palace which caught fire and Jai Singh's attention was diverted. When the fire died away, the defenders of the fort put on their saffron robes and flung themselves on their enemies. But very few of them survived though Shah's men too suffered a great deal.

According to Muhnot, Nainsi Saiya Bankalia, a brother-in-law of Raja Jai Singh, played a treacherous role. He gave the keys of the fort to Mahmud Shah. The front door was flung open and the Muslim troops entered the fort on 12 November 1484. The women performed their traditional rites of *johar*, but unfortunately two daughters and a son of Jai Singh fell in the hands of Begarha and suffered badly. The two princesses were sent to the harem and the prince was converted to Islam and given the name of Malik Hussain Bahmani. Jai Singh and his prime minister who fell into the hands of Begarha were asked to purchase life by embracing Islam, which they refused and preferred death.

A bardic lore says that the Raja of Champanir during *Nowrattra* showed lustic intentions to Kalika Devi who had for the occasion assumed the human form of a beautiful woman. Kalika Mata pronounced a curse upon him that his royalty would end.

The victor changed the name of Champanir to Muhammadabad and made it his capital. It gained greater importance than Ahmedabad. Fifty years later when the Mughul army laid a seige, Champanir was strongly defended by Ikhtiyar Khan, a general of the Sultan. He surrendered on 9 August 1535 when news reached him that Emperor Humayun himself was in command. The capture of Champanir fort delighted Humayun so much that he commemorated his victory by striking coins at this place. As the Mughuls, after the conquest of Gujarat, gave Ahmedabad greater importance, Champanir lost its glory. The buildings of Champanir have turned into ruins because of disuse. The Jami Masjid, built in 1483-90 is however in shape and is one of the finest mosques of Gujarat.

14. AHMEDABAD

'A NOBLE city in a high state of prosperity which for the pleasantries of its climate and the display of the choice of production of the whole globe is almost unrivalled.'*—Abul Fazel.

In the year 1411 Ahmad Shah succeeded his grandfather Muzaffar Shah as the Sultan of Gujarat. The same year he selected a site in Asaval on Sabarmati for his capital. He founded there a new city which in honour of four Ahmads—himself, his teacher Shaikh Ahmad Khathu and two others, viz. Kazi Ahmad and Malik Ahmad—he named Ahmedabad and to it he transferred his capital. Ahmedabad grew into a large city and was well protected with its thick and high walls, many gates, broad avenues, well paved streets and abundant vegetation.

To clear his capital of robbers and highwaymen who had made the people's life miserable, Ahmad Shah built a strong fort known as Bhadra. The fort was square in form and enclosed an area of about 43 acres and contained 162 houses. It had eight gates. Of the gates two were in the east and one was in the south-west corner. A gateway near the Kali Mata temple forms the entrance to the citadel. It was through this that Mahmud Begarha, a 15-year old king with quiver on the back and bow in hand, marched with only 300 horsemen to dispose of his rebel nobles and their 30,000 followers. The young king ordered that elephants lead and royal music play as he marched slowly on the main street. The effect was terrific. Some of his nobles joined him and others fled. He destroyed their leader. He repaired the walls and planted trees beside roads. But Portuguese competition for trade affected the prosperity of the capital.

In the words of Ogilby (1680) Bhadra was the strongest Mughul fortress in India. It was also one of the most magnificent forts.

There is an unbelievable story about the construction of the wall. Manek Burj was named after the Hindu monk who had to be conciliated before the walls were built. Every day bricks were laid and every night these were found in pieces. Then the Sultan asked Manek to give proof of his power. He got the magician into a small jar and kept him there till he promised to let the building rise in peace.

In 1572 Akbar, called by a party of Gujarati nobles marched to Surat. He entered Ahmedabad on 18 November 1573 without any opposition and captured it. After his departure

*Majumdar, Ray Chaudhari and Dutt, *Advanced History of India*, p. 563.

insurrection broke out in his newly conquered province. He hurriedly made it to Ahmedabad, traversed 600 miles in eleven days and vanquished the insurgents in a battle near Ahmedabad on 2 September 1573. Gujarat became a province of his empire. It turned out to be a profitable source of income. It gave him free access to the sea but he did not envisage its advantage nor did he build any sea power. At the close of the 16th century, the city was large, well formed and remarkably healthy.

In early 17th century the Dutch and English came to Ahmedabad. In 1619 the English built factories at Ahmedabad. But when Emperor Jahangir visited Ahmedabad, he found nothing worth admiring in the city. He was disgusted and called it Gardabad, 'dirty city'. Later when he heard that plague had broken out, he called it Bimaristan (sick town), hell city, etc. During her nine months stay there Nurjahan governed the city.

Shahjahan built a palace in Bhadra. When Prince Murad received news of his father Shahjahan's death he crowned himself at Ahmedabad on 5 September 1657.

From 1640 to 1670 the fortune of Ahmedabad was at its best. On the death of Aurangazeb in 1707 Marathas sent an expedition under Balaji. From 1738 to 1753 the city was under the direct rule of Momin Khan and the Gaikwar's agent Rangoji.

In 1780 a British force under General Goddard, in alliance with Fateh Singh Gaikwar against the Pune government, advanced to Ahmedabad. Seeing no sign of surrender General Goddard opened a battery and made a breach in the city wall. As two days passed in waiting for an offer of surrender, the English rushed up to the breach. The struggle was fierce, the garrison yielded only after 3000 of their number and 106 of the assailants lay dead. There was no plundering nor excess. A detachment of British troops was left to garrison the citadel. The city was handed over to Fateh Singh. It remained with the Marathas till 1817 when after the overthrow of the Peshwa it reverted to the British government.

One of the chief remains in the fort is Sultan Ahmad's mosque built in 1414. Its outer wall, bare of ornaments, carries on it a design reminder of the first attempts of Hindus at building in Muslim style.

Ganj Shahid, the martyr's mound, is the tomb of warriors who perished in Sultan's early battles.

The Jami Masjid—its construction began in A.D. 1411—has 260 pillars. Manek Burj (or the ruby bastion) is built round the foundation stone of the city. The tower used to contain a large 77 feet round-roofed well known as Manek Kuwa or ruby well. By the change in the course of the river the well went dry and was filled up in 1866.

Forts of Deccan

SOME of the forts on the western coast of India owe their origin to the imperial policies of the Delhi Sultanates though the fort of Devagiri had been there even before the Delhi rulers could make their presence felt. But like any other defensive measure, the Devagiri fort could prove its worth not only by its fortifications but also by the will of the defenders. This is what transpired when in 1294 Ala-ud-din Khalji, even before he ascended the throne, invaded Devagiri. King Ramachandradeva sued for peace on humiliating terms not because the fort failed to provide him protection but because he and his son had not properly planned a defence strategy. Nor could the king provide requisite leadership.

Bahmani Dynasty

After some time Daulatabad fort became the rallying point for rebel nobles. Ala-ud-din Bahman Shah successfully revolted against Mohammed bin Tughluq and in 1347 laid the foundation of the Bahmani dynasty. He selected Gulbarga—and not Devagiri—as his capital and for administrative reasons divided his kingdom into four provinces, viz. Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Bidar and Berar, each under the charge of a governor. Gulbarga and Bidar also had a stronghold each. The Bahmani kings waged wars against the neighbouring Hindu kingdoms of Warangal and Vijayanagar, whose capitals, viz. Warangal and Vijayanagar too were strongly fortified.

In 1424 the king of Warangal died in battle and with him the kingdom came to an end. Later, one of the Bahmani kings, namely Ahmad Shah Bahmani found Gulbarga not altogether safe and therefore in 1429 shifted his capital to Bidar. Baronical intrigues for position and influence, however, weakened the Bahmani kingdom and after the reign of Mohammed III the provincial governors declared their independence. Following the death of Kalimullah Shah in 1527, the Bahmani dynasty came to an end. In its place came up five independent Sultanates, viz.

Berar (Imadshahi dynasty),
Ahmadnagar (Nizamshahi),
Bijapur (Adilshahi),
Golkunda (Qutbshahi), and
Bidar (Baridshahi).

The last four kingdoms had strong forts and they fought individually and collectively against the kings of Vijayanagar which after the battle of Talikota lost its importance and gradually disintegrated. But even in this case it was not the fortifications of Vijayanagar that failed the king; it was dissensions amongst the nobles and poor leadership that led to his defeat and sacking of the city in the most unprecedented way.

The five kingdoms too failed in the face of onslaughts from the Mughuls, Marathas and British. This need not be described here as mention of the events has been made in the following pages. This section deals with the forts of Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Warangal, Vijayanagar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkunda and Bidar.

15. DAULATABAD

DAULATABAD is one of the most natural and best preserved forts of India. It owes its beginnings, according to Stuart Paggot, to its geological formation and derives its strength from the peculiar nature of mountain ranges and spires. It is at a distance of about 15 km from Aurangabad in Maharashtra.

Daulatabad is a given name; originally it was known as Devagiri, i.e. Hill of Gods. Earlier references say that Bhillana, a Yadav prince, carried out victorious expeditions against the Hoysalas and Chalukyas and carved out a large kingdom with his capital at Devagiri in 1187. His grandson Singhana raised it to the position of a premier kingdom, and under the succeeding Yadavas Devagiri prospered.

But the wealth and prosperity proved a bane. It attracted freebooters. Ala-ud-din Khalji, when he was a representative of his uncle Sultan Jalaluddin at Kara, was motivated by political and economic ambitions. He launched an attack on Devagiri in 1294 when its main army under Prince Shankaradeva had gone down south and King Ramachandradeva was ill-prepared for a war. Besides, there were inadequate provisions inside the fort and the king could muster only a small force of two-three thousand men. The king took the best course. He shut himself inside the fort.

Then as if luck mocked at Devagiri, a caravan of merchants passing by the fort abandoned some bags which the king's men took for being full of grains. The cheer and morale came down the moment it was found the bags contained salt and not grains. Discretion prevailed and Ramachandradeva opened negotiations and agreed to pay Ala-ud-din a heavy ransom. But as Ala-ud-din was leaving, Shankaradeva returned and in spite of his father's advice opened battle. Though his enthusiasm brought initial success, he was soon defeated and peace this time had to be concluded on harder terms. Devagiri had to promise annual tribute, besides the enormous ransom which was given. According to Ferista, Ala-ud-din carried 600 maunds of gold, seven maunds of pearls, two maunds of other jewels, 4,000 maunds of silk and 1,000 maunds of silver.

Twice again Ala-ud-din Khalji denuded Devagiri of its wealth. Once it was when the king withheld the tribute for three years and gave refuge to the Sultan's fugitive Rai Karnadeva II, ruler of Gujarat (now Ala-ud-din was the Sultan). The fort could not provide protection when in 1307 an expedition led by Malik Kafur was successful and the king was compelled to sue for peace. Devagiri henceforth was ruled as a vassal. Rai Karna's daughter

Devala Devi also fell into the hands of the Sultan's men who sent her to Delhi where she was married to the Sultan's eldest son Khizr Khan. The second time was when Shankaradeva on his father's death, tried to regain independence. In 1313 Malik Naib marched on Devagiri and defeated Shankaradeva. The Raja was killed

In 1316 when Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah, the third son of Ala-ud-din Khalji ascended the throne, rebellion broke out in Devagiri. The following year the Sultan marched in person at the head of a large army. Harpal Deva of Devagiri fled but he was pursued, captured and flayed alive. Devagiri now came under the control of the Sultan. It next passed into the hands of Tughluq when Ghias-ud-din became the ruler of Delhi.

Mohammad bin Tughluq decided in 1327 to shift the capital from Delhi to Devagiri, as the latter was free from attacks of Mongols and was also more centrally located. It was Mohammad bin Tughluq who gave the new capital the name of Daulatabad, i.e. City of Fortune. But according to Stanley Lane-Pool, 'Daulatabad was a monument of misdirected energy,* and fortune smiled but faintly for a moment on it. Circumstances compelled Mohammad to take back his capital to Delhi.

The disgruntled nobles of the Deccan soon after met at Daulatabad. Mohammad Tugluq marched to Daulatabad and laid siege to the fort. But after three months he had to leave for Gujarat. The rebels then set up an independent kingdom in 1347. Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahmani Shah whose story reads like a fiction took his capital to Gulbarga and divided his kingdom into four parts, viz. Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Berar and Bidar, each under a governor's charge. When the Bahmani kingdom broke up and five Sultanates came to be set up, Daulatabad became a part of the Nizam-shahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar. In 1633 after much warfare Daulatabad was annexed to the Mughul empire. For the Mughuls the going was easy, as they had penetrated into the foot of the citadel and the defenders finding themselves completely isolated, had no alternative but to surrender. The kingdom of Ahmad-nagar, and with it the fort of Daulatabad, was merged with the empire of Delhi.

Daulatabad has been considered as one of the most complex and intricate of the forts of Deccan. It required minimum artificial defence. Ordinary means of reducing the fortress such as mines, covered ways, batteries etc. were useless against it.

The city of Daulatabad is defended by a strong hornwork consisting of a succession of eight gateways. Three concentric lines of walls with a large number of bastions culminate into the citadel.

The fortress is perched on a cone shaped hill of rock that rises abruptly from the base to about 600 feet in height and has a circumference of about three miles. Its escarpment is smooth and could not be scaled.

The entrance to the citadel is defended by a wide and deep wet moat which was excavated out of a living rock. The bridge over the moat is of an unusual design. It descends rapidly by a flight

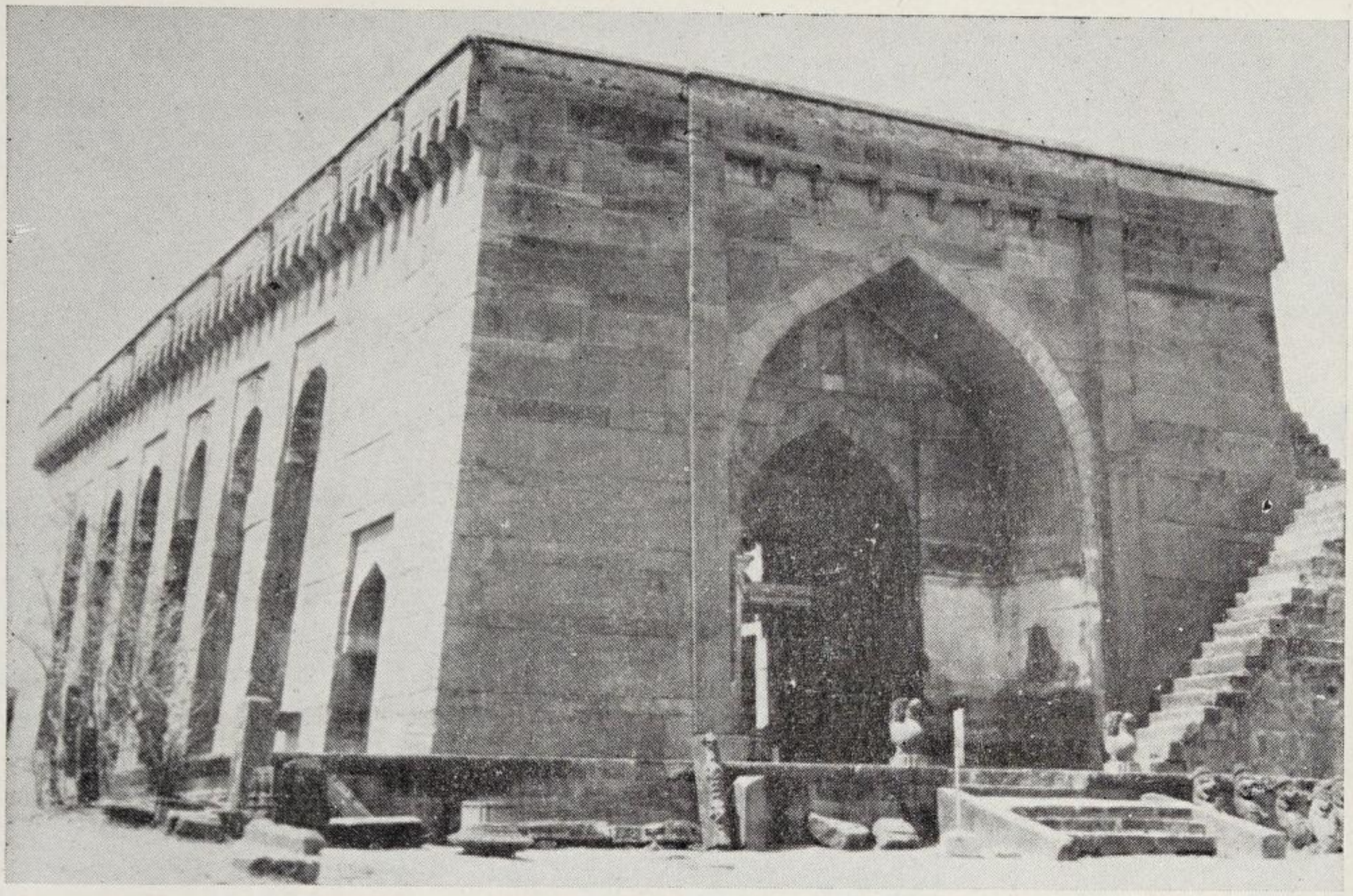
*Majumdar, op cit., p. 313.

Dhaboi Fort : Heera Gate

Champanir Fort : Jharoka on the larbican wall of the Halol Gate of the citadel

Ahmedabad Fort : Bhadra tower, north entrance

Daulatabad Fort



Warangal Fort

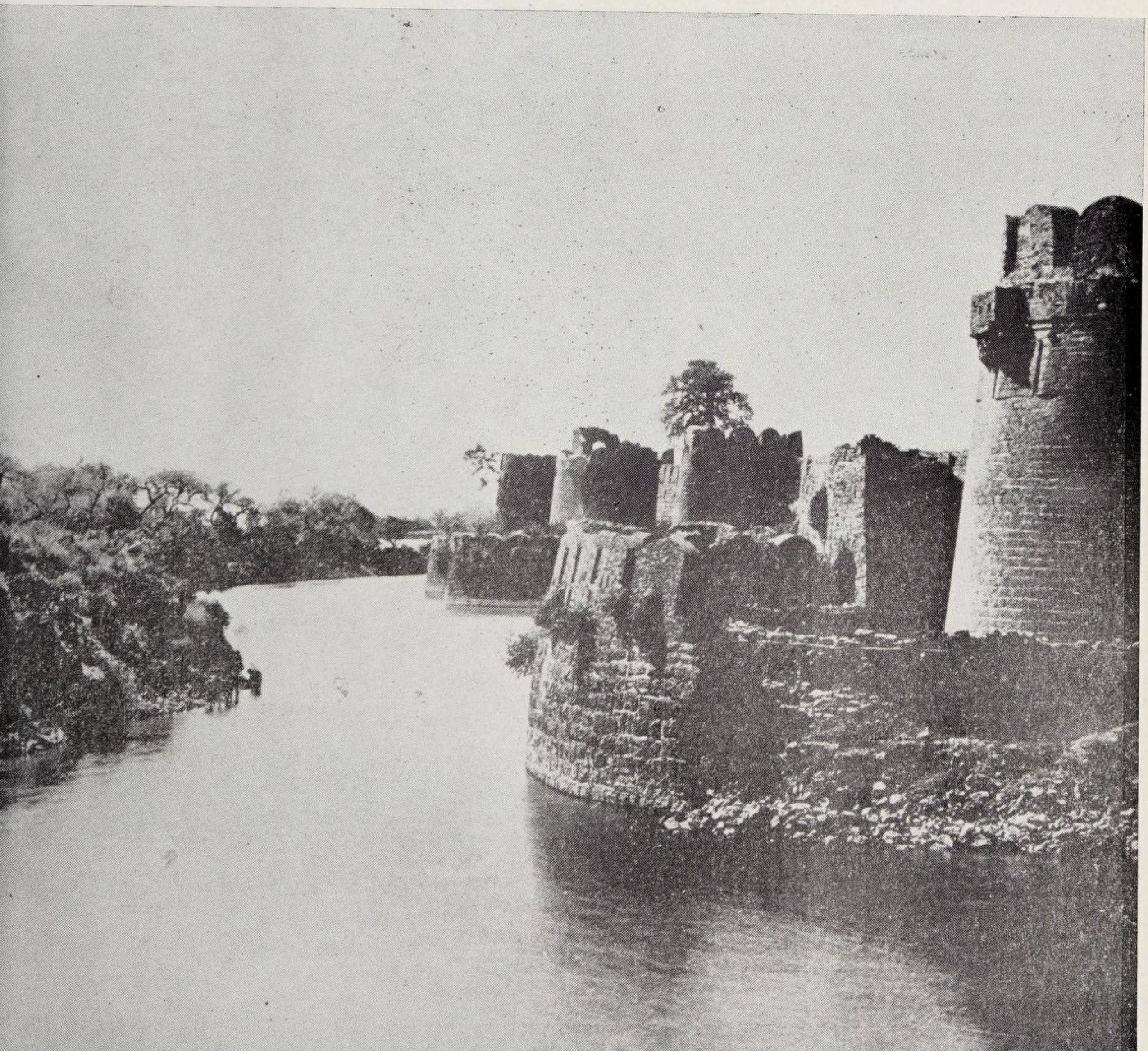
Vijayanagar Ruins

Gulbarga :
Fort courtyard

Golkunda Fort

Ahmadnagar Fort

Bidar Fort



Bijapur Fort : Haider Burj

of steps and rises by another flight of steps to a gallery on the outer side.

This is an alternative arrangement to a draw-bridge. In case of a siege, water was filled in the moat to the desired level. The height of the water was controlled and adjusted. The moat along with the bridge could be flooded to make the bridge impassable.

The gallery on the other side of the moat goes around three sides of a strong and spiral tower and the enemy rushing through it was under attack from the tower. From the end of the gallery a few steps lead down to a small open court. On one side of it is the entrance doorway to the tunnel, which in fact is the only entrance to the upper fort or inner citadel. It is difficult to walk in the dark and spiral passage of the tunnel where even during day time one has to take a lamp.

At the bend in the tunnel was a small chamber which was provided with a flue pierced through the wall and fitted with a staging of iron plates. On these plates a charcoal fire was lit which, fanned by the wind blowing through the flue would fill the tunnel with its fumes and make any ingress impossible.

On emerging from the trap door at the head of the tunnel one arrives at the foot of a wide and long series of steps which ascend to a pavilion which was perhaps the residence of a princess. From this level a further flight of a hundred steps leads to the level of the citadel. Here are gun batteries and cannons. (One of these was brought to position by a Dutch artillery man.)

The citadel has plenty of water supply from perennial springs.

The outer side of the fort has numerous monuments, palaces, temples and mosques. And, inside is the Chand Minar, 210 feet high and 70 feet in circumference at the base. This was erected by Ala-ud-din Bahmani to commemorate his conquests.

Ibn Batuta wrote in 1342 that the Sultan's greatest work was the strengthening and improving of the marvellous citadel of the Daulatabad fort.

16. WARANGAL

WARANGAL 175 km from Hyderabad, was part of the Andhra kingdom till the middle of the 12th century when it was conquered by the Kakatiyas who made it their capital. Prod Raja, a powerful Kakatiya king, constructed a fort in the capital, as is known from inscriptions on the eastern and western gates and pillars of the fort. The stone wall of the fort had a circumference of a little over four miles.

The defences of the Warangal fort were further strengthened by Rudramma, Prod Raja's widow or daughter (there is no definite information on this); by building an outer mud wall enclosing an area of about two miles.

These additions were designed by one of her relations Ganapathi.

In 1294 when she faced attack from the Sultan of Delhi, Rudramma abdicated in favour of her grandson Prataparudradeva. The first attack on Warangal by Chhajju, a general of Ala-ud-din Khalji, was repulsed and he had to turn back. The second time, in 1310, Malik Kafur, another general of Ala-ud-din Khalji, attacked Warangal with a large force. Finding himself not in a position to defend, Prataparudradeva shut himself in the fort. The invaders made several assaults in which the garrison suffered heavy losses and they captured a large number of citizens. Reduced to extremities, the Raja submitted and offered an immediate indemnity of 300 elephants, 7000 horses, large quantities of coined money and jewels and assured payment of an annual tribute in future. The terms were accepted and Malik Naib returned.

Prataparudradeva complained of the great distance to Delhi to which he would be obliged to send the tribute and requested for posting an officer to receive the tribute at a reasonable distance from Warangal. Malik Naib was appointed in 1313, as Qutlugh Khan for the purpose. The Raja remained loyal to the Tughluqs who took over from the Khaljis in 1321. But he thought that his fealty had dissolved with the change in government at Delhi. That very year Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq sent his eldest son Ulugh Khan to reduce Warangal to obedience.

Ulugh Khan met with no opposition and laid siege to Warangal. The Raja stoutly defended the earthern ramparts and, though the combats were well fought, he found himself outmatched. He, therefore, attempted to purchase peace by promising tribute on terms similar to those which were agreed to by Malik Kafur. But the offer was rejected. In the mean time Prataparudradeva was engaged in cutting the communications of the besiegers. When for some time Ulugh Khan did not receive any message from Delhi he suspected some foul play. He was beguiled by the rumour purposefully circulated that the Sultan was dead. Ulugh Khan raised the siege and his army marched in separate divisions to Devagiri (Daulatabad). On their way they were pursued and harassed by the army of Warangal.

Two years later, in 1323, Ulugh Khan persuaded his father to send another expedition into Telingana and this time he opened the siege with greater vigour. The efforts of the troops supported by artillery, such as catapults and ballistae, succeeded in reducing both the outer and inner lines of defence. And in their hands fell Prataparudradeva and his family, nobles and their wives, children, elephants, horses, and treasures and for the first time Telingana came under Delhi's rule. It was divided into fiefs and districts which were allotted to the Muslim nobles. Warangal, renamed Sultanpur, was made a province of the Delhi empire.

But when the Sultan's rule became weak, the provinces of the extreme south started slipping from his grasp. Kanhaiya Naik, a scion of the Kakatiyas, seized the opportunity, expelled all ruling officers from Telingana and

established himself as the ruler of Warangal in 1346.

About this time the Bahmanis tried to expand their kingdom. Their army under Bahadur Khan marched to the gates of Warangal and forced Kanhaiya Raja to pay as ransom one lakh gold *huns*. He also surrendered 26 elephants. With these, Bahadur Khan returned to Gulbarga. Not long afterwards, Mohammed marched in person into Telingana and sent a force to Warangal. Kanhaiya got frightened and fled into the jungles. While Mohammed remained in Telingana for two years, his troops besieged Warangal. Finally in 1364 Kanhaiya obtained peace by surrendering 300 elephants. He ceded Golkunda also.

In 1424 Ahmed Shah Bahmani's general Khan-i-Azam attacked Warangal and captured its fortress and treasures. The ruler of Warangal was killed and with that the independence of Warangal extinguished for good. On its ruins grew up the Muslim kingdom of Golkunda.

17. VIJAYANAGAR

THE Raja of Anagundi gave shelter to a fugitive who happened to be a nophew of Mohammad bin Tughluq. The Sultan came in hot pursuit of his nephew and in a fight slew both the nephew and the Raja and appointed a governor. The latter, however, could not cope with the situation and had to be removed. Eventually the kingship and ministership of Anagundi was conferred on two brothers who had risen to be minister and treasurer, respectively, of the Raja of Anagundi. Under the advice of Madavachariya, Harihar and Bukka founded in 1335 a city on the banks of the Tungabhadra which they named Vijayanagar, the City of Victory. The kingdom prospered under their rule. Vijayanagar is now a ruined city in Bellary district, Karnataka.

Almost about the same time another power was rising in the south. In 1347 Bahmani Shah founded a kingdom with Gulbarga as his capital. The two kingdoms were rivals and came constantly in conflict. Even when the Bahmani kingdom broke into five kingdoms, the breakaways singularly or collectively carried out relentless wars against the kingdom of Vijayanagar. In 1366 Mohammed Shah invaded Vijayanagar and massacred a large number of people but he could not take the city. Even so Bukka had to buy peace. To protect the city Harihar II (1399-1406) raised walls and towers of the fort and strengthened their fortifications. Devaraya I (1406-1422) came into violent conflict and had to accept peace on humiliating terms. During the reign of the next King Devaraya II (1422-1446) the Bahmani kings blocked the capital and

starved its people. Fortunately Devaraya realised his weaknesses and mended the fences.

The fortifications of the city no doubt were formidable, especially for the foreign horse who on reaching the citadel would find themselves exposed to strong fire from the batteries thus putting them into great confusion and loss. Paes who travelled Vijayanagar during the reign of Krishnadevaraya gives an account of the system. He says that certain pointed stones of great height are fixed in the ground. The forts were equipped with up-to-date weapons of offence and defence as high as man's breadth and at intervals of a lance shaft and half with the same distance between them and the great wall.* Just to the south of Kamalpur, a strong fort wall with high batteries is the outer wall of the palace enclosure. There are lines of defence on the south of Vijayanagar. On Tungabhadra side is the wall to the north of Kamalpur. Second, a stone wall about a mile long is a strong defence for approaching from the Kampili side. The third line contains a gateway leading to Talwar Ghatta where the people had to cross over to the Anagundi side Close to the northern bank of Tungabhadra there is a fort wall with battlements at intervals. Before we reach Anagundi, there are two more lines of fortifications. On the north of Anagundi is a strong wall with batteries connecting the two ranges of hills, which enclose Anagundi. There are then another three more lines of strong masonry walls. All these must have made the fort quite impregnable.

Abdul Razzak tells us that the fortress of Vijayanagar is in the form of a circle situated on the summit of a hill. Varthima states that the capital is situated on the side of a mountain and is seven miles in circumference. Centi remarks that it was situated near very steep mountains

The fort of Vijayanagar was surrounded by deep moats which prevented the enemy from coming near the walls. The fort was equipped with up-to-date weapons of offence and defence. On all other walls were set up catapults which showered stones, clubs and viable axes upon the enemy, causing him much harm. A weapon called *dambholt*, which was worked by gunpowder, threw into the midst of the besiegers balls of stones spreading destruction. *Dambholt* was probably the siege gun Other explosive weapons were also used in defending the fort against the invaders. The defence of the forts was left in the hands of Amaranayakas in whose loyalty and ability the Raja had great confidence.

Krishnadevaraya who ascended the throne in 1509 added several buildings in the capital. He was succeeded in 1529 or 30 by Achyuta who died in 1542, and then by Sadashiva (1542-67). The real power passed into the hands of three brothers namely Ramaraya, Tirumala and Venkatachari. The five Sultans combined and gave a battle at Talikota on 23 January 1565.

Ramaraya, though over 90 years of age, superintended the war operations and encouraged his men. But one of

*Suryanarain Rao, B. *History of Vijayanagar*, the Never *to be forgotten Empire*, p. 314, footnote,

the enemy's elephants stampeded him and he was taken as prisoner. The king of Ahmadnagar had his head cut off. The disaster caused instant panic and no attempt to rally on a fresh position or to defend the city was made. The panic-stricken princes carried on 550 elephants all the treasures they could lay their hands on—valued at 100 million sterling—state insignia and jewelled throne. The invaders played havoc for five months and they either demolished important buildings or burnt them. They broke down palaces and temples and did not spare even the strong walls. The plunder was so great that every private man in the enemy's army became rich in gold, jewels, horses, arms and slaves.

It has been observed that had the Vijayanagar princes after the battle of Talikota simply closed the gates of the impregnable fort and allowed the invaders to reduce them, the task would have been utterly impossible for the combined Mohammedan forces who never united in cordial friendship. A small garrison inside the fortress would have been able to keep at bay a powerful army of the enemy for many months.

In 1568 Tirumala murdered Sadashiva and seized the throne for himself. A few years later he was forced to fly to Chandragiri. It may not be out of place to mention that in 1639 one of his descendants granted to Francis Day land on which stands Fort St. George of Madras. In fact, after Talikota, Vijayanagar had lost all its glamour and independence. It had developed into an unconquerable fort but unfortunately the rulers faced the enemies badly in the field and the unconquerable was conquered.

18. GULBARGA

THE fort of Gulbarga in Karnataka is about 363 miles from Bangalore. It was built by Raja Gulchand, but nothing is known about the year of its construction, nor how it passed on to the possession of Mohammed bin Tughluq. The possibility is that when Delhi Sultanate conquered Daulatabad, Gulbarga passed alongwith to their possession. However, we know for certain that Mohammed bin Tughluq conferred the government of Bidar and its dependencies, including Gulbarga, on Nusrat Khan on condition that he pay for it one crore rupees annually to the Sultan. Little did Nusrat Khan realise that it would be well nigh impossible to fulfil this condition. When he failed to meet the demand, he had no alternative but to revolt and this is what he did. The Sultan ordered Qutlugh Khan, governor of Daulatabad, to chastise the rebel. Nusrat Khan however escaped to Gulbarga, which he forcibly captured from Kundhra, a supporter of the Sultan.

Nusrat Khan was, nevertheless, a weak man. His companions asked Hasan, entitled Zafar Khan, to assume the leadership. Zafar Khan was a capable leader. He proclaimed independence and, in the prevailing general disorder due to the Sultan's weakening authority, captured Daulatabad also. In 1347 he assumed the title of Sikandar-i-Sani Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah-al-Wali and selected Gulbarga for his capital. He named it Ahasanabad and adorned it with buildings. The court, however, continued to function from Daulatabad. For administrative purposes, Hasan Bahman Shah divided the kingdom into four provinces, each under a governor. Of these Gulbarga, of prime importance, was governed by Malik Naib (or viceroy) who commanded Sultan Bahman Shah's confidence. Bahman Shah died in 1358 and was succeeded by his son Mohammed I.

Gulbarga continued to play an important role till 1429 when Ahmed Shah shifted his capital to Bidar. With the transfer of the capital, Gulbarga lost its place of pride.

In 1520 Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar invaded Gulbarga, razed the fortress to the ground and liberated three Bahmani princesses who were imprisoned by Ismail Adil Khan. Later Ali Adil Shah defeated the king of Vijayanagar and took revenge. He brought lots of booty and, as per inscriptions, effected repairs in the Gulbarga Fort.

In 1657 Aurangazeb, then governor of Deccan, marched upto Gulbarga. In 1686 the then Mughul governor took advantage of the decline of the power of Bijapur, marched upon it with a large army and succeeded in the conquest of Bijapur and Gulbarga. Later Gulbarga changed hands and became a part of the Nizam kingdom. Gulbarga has a formidable Bala Hisar, a veritable dungeon. It has a rectangular plan with round turrets and is built of red sandstone. It has powerful thick walls, and was defended from its battlements.

The fort had 15 towers and 26 guns, including one 25 feet long. The great mosque of Gulbarga is the only one of its type in India. It has no courtyard and measures 216 feet by 176 feet. Towards the east of the city are Bahmani tombs—squares with large domes. One of the tombs—of Khwaja Banda Nawaz—is venerated by all communities. The arches of these buildings are in Bahmani style and paintings on walls are in Persian style.

19. GOLKUNDA

THE massive and extensive fortress of Golkunda lies just to the west of Hyderabad. Originally known as Mangalwaram or Mankal, the fort was built about eight hundred years ago by the kings of Warangal. In 1364 Kanhaiya Naik Raja was compelled by circumstances to surrender it to Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani and for the next 150 years Golkunda formed part of the Bahmani kingdom, with its capital at Gulbarga.

Then in 1518, on the death of Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani, the governor of Telingana Sultan Quli proclaimed himself independent of the Bahmanis and selected Golkunda for his capital. The Qutbshahi dynasty founded by him prospered.

In 1591 Akbar sent an envoy to persuade the Sultan of Golkunda to acknowledge his suzerainty. The Sultan received the envoy and sent him back with rich gifts. In 1620 Shahjahan pressed Golkunda, Bijapur and Ahmadnagar kingdoms to pay tributes. The three agreed to pay 50 lakh rupees and Golkunda paid its share of the tribute.

The vast wealth and fertility of Golkunda was a temptation for prince Aurangazeb who in 1654 described it as 'a spacious kingdom, well cultivated, rich in mines of diamond, crystals etc., a money yielding country unmatched by the imperial dominions.'* Two years later he sent his son Sultan Mahmud to conquer Golkunda. The prince laid siege to the fort. An inscription on a tablet in the famous Musa Burj records that a shot from the guns of the fort hit the commander of the Mughul forces and killed him instantly. This shattered the morale of the Mughuls who raised the siege within four days.

Again in 1687, the Mughul forces laid siege to the fort. But the stronghold withstood the onslaught of mines and bombardments for four months and the Mughuls could not achieve any definite success. Then one night they made an attempt to enter the fort by escalade. But to the fortune of the Sultan a dog on the parapet barked, which alerted the garrison and frustrated the enemy's designs. The dog was duly rewarded with a bejewelled collar and a gold chain and was kept by the king's side.

The besiegers further suffered from famine and pestilence. Aurangazeb, however, held on this time with grim tenacity and collected more enforcement. But when valour and force of arms completely failed he bribed an Afghan soldier named Abdullah Pani who agreed to lax vigil and let the

*Moreland, W.H. *Relations of Golkunda during the 17th century.*

enemy pass through the gate. However, a faithful servant of the Sultan, who got scent of Abdullah's treachery, fought single-handed till he fell. Eventually, on 2 October 1687, the fort fell to the Mughuls. The ladies of the harem of Abul Hasan Tana Shah, like the Rajput ladies, committed *johar* though in a different manner—they drowned themselves in a well situated between the Dad Mahal (Court of Justice) and Silah Khana. The spoils of Golkunda were immense. Besides gold, jewels and silver plates the Mughul emperor pocketed rupees seven crores in cash.

After the Mughul conquest, Golkunda sank into a subsidiary position and lost all its grandeur. When the Mughuls lost their vigour, the Nizam settled in Hyderabad which grew in importance.

In its heyday Golkunda had political, cultural and social contacts with its neighbours—Bijapur, Bidar, Ahmadnagar and Vijayanagar—as also with the mighty Mughul Sultanate of Delhi. In fact, Golkunda played a vital role in the cultural evolution of the Deccan. Sultan Quli, the founder of the Qutbshahi dynasty, is known for having evolved the Qutbshahi style of architecture which is a combination of Persian, Hindu and Pathan styles. Besides the boundary walls of the fortress, he also built Jama Masjid, the royal palace and the bath.

The fortress of Golkunda is situated on a 400 feet elevation on a picturesque rocky ridge of granite. Its circumference runs into four miles and it contains 87 bastions built on 50 to 60 feet high blocks of granite, 52 windows and 8 gates. The Majnu, Petta and Musa are its famous bastions. The Majnu Burj is the loftiest tower. The Musa was built in 1642.

On Majnu and Petta Burj are kept two historic guns, 21 feet and 16.2 feet long, fine specimens of artillery which were brought and used by Aurangazeb in the siege. The Bala Hisar gate leading to the royal apartment was massive, ornamented and well defended. During the war boiled oil was poured from its top over the enemy, thus preventing his approach to the gate. Secondly, the massive cross walls of the gate are built in such a way that sounds in the interior of this gate echoed and resounded clearly on the 400 feet high summit which is adjacent to the royal apartments. The *zenana* palaces were comfortable and well guarded.

The eight huge gates are named Fateh, Makka, Patancheroo, Banjara, Jamal, Moti, Bahmani and New Fort, Fateh being the most important. The gates were studded with iron spikes to prevent elephants from battering them in. Other attractions in the fort are the Dad Mahal (Court of Justice), Silah Khana, the Hanging Roof gardens, a Balhoa tree and guns.

The Hanging Roof garden was spread over the palaces of the two Hindu favourites Prema Mati and Tara Mati of Abdullah Shah, the seventh Sultan of Golkunda. The Balhoa tree has a girth of 80 feet and the lower portion of the trunk has sufficient space and ventilation in its sides for use as a lounge table for four persons.

The ruins of the royal palace, mosque, arsenal, gun powder magazines, Madana temple, cultivated fields, water tanks, etc. inside the fort also are of historical importance. Whenever a danger was apprehended, the population of the city was shifted inside the fort. Supply of food and water posed no problem. One of the corners of Baradari has secret subterranean 5-mile long passages to Gosha Mahal, a resort for royal ladies. This was used by the Qutbshahi Sultans during danger (*gosha* means shelter from observation). The construction of this Mahal was started by Sultan Abdullah in 1627 and it was completed by Abul Hasan Tana Shah, the last ruler of the Qutbshahi dynasty. It had 1,000 halls but no vestiges of it are visible now.

20. AHMADNAGAR

THE Satavahanas had a prosperous kingdom on the south-western coast of the country in ancient times. Commerce and trade flourished with even foreign countries. One of the towns in their kingdom was Ashmak on which site there now stands Ahmadnagar, about 117 km from Pune in Maharashtra. Later the Yadavas took Ashmak and it became part of the Devagiri kingdom. Under the new rulers also Ashmak grew prosperous. The first to denude Ashmak of its wealth was Ala-ud-din Khalji, nephew and son-in-law of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq. Later Kutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah marched on Devagiri and on conquest Ashmak merged with the Delhi empire.

Discontent against the Delhi rule led to a rebellion amongst the nobles in Deccan and they set an independent kingdom under Bahman Shah, with Gulbarga as capital. For a considerable time Ashmak continued to be part of the kingdom, governor Ahmed Nizam Shah, also known as Nizam-ul-mulk, proclaimed independence in 1490 after defeating the Bahmani general Jahangir Khan. Thus was founded the Nizamshahi dynasty. Nizam Shah built palaces and gardens at Ashmak. In 1494 he gave the township the name of Ahmadnagar. It is recorded that Ahmadnagar was a beautiful city and its splendour could be compared to that of Baghdad and Cairo.

The splendour however is envied and its preservation demands constant efforts at security. Husain Nizam Shah (1553-65) therefore gave the city a mud fort. But the fort could not stand a combined attack by Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur and Ibrahim Qutb of Golkunda. Nizam Shah could not repulse the attack and bought peace. He also concluded peace with another neighbour, Ramaraya of Vijayanagar. A wise man, Nizam

Shah simultaneously built a stone fort and added a ditch to the fort.

Husain Nizam Shah's successors were weaklings and their reigns were full of conspiracy and deceit. In one case, the Prime Minister Mirza Khan acted against Sultan Miran Shah and at his orders the head of the Sultan was cut off and planted on a pole on one of the bastions of the citadel.

Then came the regency of Chand Bibi when Ahmadnagar shone with the deeds of her courage and bravery. It was the conflict between the Dakhani and the non-Dakhani factions which resulted in bloody engagements and realisation by both factions that a capable hand alone could restore order. They called upon Chand Bibi, aunt of the minor king, to take up the regency.

Ahmadnagar Fort is reputed for its being well planned and well built. Even though it is on low ground it is not commanded by any distant spot, for its glacis (earthbank), 35 feet high, cover the four walls. It is built of solid stone and has large circular bastions at short intervals. It is armed with 3-4 guns in casemated embrasures with a terrace above and loopholes for musketing on the bastions. Sixty 12 to 50 pounder guns could fire shots and check the movement of the enemy. In fact, Ahmadnagar is said to be one of the strongest forts of the country.

When in September 1595 Prince Murad arrived at Ahmadnagar at the head of 30,000 Mughul and Rajput horse beside large infantry and artillery, with Mirza Khankhana one of Emperor Akbar's generals, he did not find the going easy. Chand Bibi was an able ruler. She stored and checked provisions, granaries and ordnances and the Mughul army had to keep its siege on for months to no result. Even when a gate caught fire and Mirza tried to advance, he had to hurriedly escape in the face of a charge of pebbles by Chand Bibi's men who had temporarily forgotten their internal strife under her leadership. The fort was besieged from November 1595 to February 1596 when peace was concluded. Hardly had four years passed when in 1600 Prince Danial and Khankhana, the Mughul general, again besieged the fort. This time the siege was successful because of mutiny among the defenders in which Chand Bibi was murdered. The fort passed into the hands of the Mughuls (the kingdom was annexed to the Mughul empire in 1633) and remained with them till 1759 when the commandant sold it treacherousiy to Sadashiv Rao Bhau, the cousin of the third Peshwa, and the cession was confirmed by a treaty. However, in 1797 the fort was given up by a treaty to Shinde.

In 1803 General Wellesley captured the Ahmadnagar town but found it difficult to storm the fort. He found in his reconnoitring, that the glacis provided complete protection to the wall and there was no suitable shot for bombardment. But then they cunningly bribed 4000 rupees to Raghu Rao, the Deshmukh of Bhingar who tendered them advice to mount attack from the east face. The attack from east proved successful. A wall suffered severe

damages. Unnerved by this, the commandant of the fort surrendered and as per terms left the fort with a garrison of 1400 men. The British found the palace of Shinde and other large buildings a place of great splendour. In two rooms of the palace were found several dozen large handsome glasses, two electrifying machines, an organ, a pianoforte, chandeliers, and many other luxuries. In other rooms were the richest stuffs of India, cloth of gold and silver, splendid armour, silks, satin, velvets, furs, shawls, plates and cash. The fort, by the Treaty of Surji Arjangaon, was given to Peshwa. Under the terms of the Treaty of Poona (13 June 1817) Bajirao II handed over the fort to the English.

The Ahmadnagar fort has often been used as a prison. To name a few prisoners : Yesubai and her daughter Bhawani Bai (1681-82), Tuloji Angre by Nana Sahib, Sadashiv Rao Bhau by Nana Phadnavis, Chhtrapati Shivaji IV of Kolhapur (1883), Lokmanya Tilak. During the Quit India movement (1942) national luminaries like Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, G.B. Pant, Kripalani were imprisoned in this fort. Nehru wrote his famous work *Discovery of India* while in confinement in the Ahmadnagar fort.

21. BIDAR

LEGEND has it that Bidar is the short form of Viduranagar, an ancient city named after Vidura, the legendary figure of Mahabharata. Archeological finds have revealed that Bidar, situated 740 km north of Bangalore, is located at a site where in the 10th century there existed a fort. An inscription reads that Bidar was a part of the Chalukya empire. Subsequently it passed into the hands of Yadavas of Devagiri and later to the Kakatiyas of Warangal.

It was against these Kakatiyas that the Tughluq Prince Ulugh Khan laid siege, and according to the historian Barni, he succeeded in occupying outer defences which made his task easier. Later when Ulugh Khan ascended the Delhi throne as Mohammed Bin Tughluq in 1341, he conferred Bidar on one of his nobles, Nusrat Khan. But Nusrat Khan does not appear to have been a wise man, for within no time he created conditions of revolt. In 1347 one Zafar Khan with 20,000 horse and with the support of the Raja of Warangal, who had not forgotton his loss, appeared before Bidar and defeated Nusrat Khan. Zafar Khan was unanimously elected as the Sultan. He ruled from Gulbarga and divided his empire into four provinces, Bidar being one of these. Zafar Khan assumed the title of Alauddin Bahmani and after him his dynasty came to be known as Bahmani.

It did not take the Bahmani rulers

long to realise that Gulbarga being nearer to their rival Vijayanagar was not too secure a place for the capital. Com paratively Bidar was more secure and also climatically better. In 1429 Ahmed Shah Wali shifted the Bahmani capital to Bidar. The old fort was renovated. It has also been surmised that he built a new fort after demolishing the old fort. Another view is that he incorporated the old fort in the new fortifications. Whatever that be, one thing is certain that new additions were made so that cannons could be mounted on the fort. A large palace was also constructed.

The Bahmanis were good rulers but with the passage of time their administration deteriorated and after Mohammed Shah II they proved mere weaklings. Bidar became the capital of the Bidarshahi dynasty. But the Bidarshahi Sultans were mere puppets in the hands of their ministers, Baridis. In 1529 when Ismail Adil Shah of Bijapur invaded Bidar and laid siege to the fort, Amir Barid entrusted the defence of Bidar citadel to his eldest son. Adil Shah was so disgusted with the insolence of the Barids that he declined to heed to the intercession of Sultan Alauddin Imdad Shah of Berar and he accused Amir Barid of having inflicted unpardonable injustices on Bijapur. A conflict ensued in which Barid was taken prisoner and sent to Bijapur. Barid s son evacuated the garrison from the Bidar Fort after which Shah entered the fort. He distributed jewels among his nobles and Bidar became a part of Adilshahi territory. The Bijapur Sultan repaired the fort of Bidar and gave attention to its defences.

In 1622 Malik Amber attacked Bidar, expelled Ibrahim Adil Shah's garrison and plundered the town. Bidar was annexed to the Mughul empire.

In 1636 when Shahjahan visited Daulatabad, Mohammed Adil Shah sued for peace. The Mughul king was generous and reinstated Bidar and other places to Adil Shah.

In 1656 Aurangazeb, the then Mughul Viceroy of Deccan, marched to Bidar. He found the place strongly fortified and laid siege to the city. He brought artillery to the edge of the ditch, breached two bastions and damaged a portion of the lower walls. The Mughul army scaled the walls and discharged rockets and grenades on the enemy troops. One of the rockets struck Malik Marijan, the commandant of the fort. The dying commandant yielded the citadel and the Mughul army made a victorious entry into the fort. The booty was enormous and they captured 12 lakh rupees in cash and ammunition worth 80 lakh rupees, besides 230 guns. Bidar was again annexed to the Mughul empire.

In 1713 Asaf Jah, a Mughul general was appointed Subedar of the Deccan with the title of Nizam-ul-Mulk. He founded the house of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

In 1758 Bidar was raided by Bhonsle. Later the French demanded the fort of Bidar. In 1760 Nizam made peace with Peshwa. The latter returned Bidar to the Nizam. In 1948 the Nizam state came to an end and with that Bidar also came to be merged with the Indian Union.

The Bidar Fort is irregular rhomboid in shape and is one of the most formidable forts of the country. Its external circumference runs into 2.5 miles in length and it has 37 bastions and seven gates. The fort is surrounded by glacis and moats in the form of triple channel with partition walls hewn out of solid rocks. The width of the moat differs from place to place—between the glacis and the first partition wall it is about 32 feet, and between the second wall and scarp about 42 feet. The bastions are either round or octagonal, a few are even square. The parapets are honey-combed and provide facilities for firing muskets as well as cannons. The wall near the main gate should have been breached and was perhaps built at different periods. The gates are : Mandu, Kalmadgi, Delhi, Kalyani and Carali; besides two gates are anonymous.

The first gate provides the main approach. The draw-bridge over the moat was built in 1683 by Mukhtiar Khan Al Hassini, the Mughul governor. The second gateway has on it effigies of two tigers (*Sharza*). It was built by Mohammed Shah II. Below it is the Naqqar Khana wherefrom music was played four times a day. At a short distance is the Gumbad Darwaza and in between the two a large force could be located. A colossal banyan tree of antiquity is at the entrance of the Gumbad Darwaza.

Inside, the fort has many buildings built by different rulers at different times. The Takhat Mahal, built by Ahmed Shah Alwali, had an imposing audience hall. Massive arches decorated its entrance and at its back was the Sultan's room (royal hall). It was so built that it should provide security from disloyal inmates as well as from the enemy outside. It was crowned with a large dome. The Bahmanis highly valued porcelain China of which the choicest collection was a present from Mahmood Gawan.

Inside the fort were also magazines which stored arms, rooms and explosive material. Other interesting attractions are : Rangin Mahal, Shahi Malkhana, Shahi Hamam, Turkish Mahal, Gagan Mahal, Diwan-e-Am, a 16-pillared mosque and a water spring,

22. BIJAPUR

IN Vijayapura, which literally means the City of Victory, the Chalukyas had constructed a fort in the 11th century. An inscription at the entrance of the citadel states that the fort, situated in present-day Karnataka, was built in an area covered by seven villages.

Vijayapura was occupied in 1300 by Mohammedans and two decades later as per inscription on the pilaster of a

mosque, Malik Kasim-ud-Din, son of Malik Kafur, erected the upper part of the mosque.

After the Khaljis the Tughluqs ruled Vijayapura till 1457 when it was annexed to the Bahmani kingdom by its minister Khwaja Mahmud Gawan. Thirty-two years later, in 1489, the Bahmani governor Yusuf Adil Shah became independent of the Bahmanis and established his dynasty, known as Adilshahi with Bijapur as the capital.

Adil Shah apprehended attack from Bahmani rulers who might try to recover Bijapur and therefore, for purposes of defence, he built a citadel in 1510. He died the same year. Nothing remarkable happened to Bijapur for the next 47 years except that two incompetent Sultans were severely dealt with. The third Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah I ably ruled from 1534 to 1557. In 1542 Burhan Nizam of Ahmadnagar and Amir Barid of Bidar attacked Bijapur from the north. Finding himself unable to give battle, Ibrahim escaped to Gulbarga. The following years, Bijapur was attacked from three sides—by Burhan Nizam in the north, Jamshed Qutb in the east and Ramaraya in the south. Whereas Burhan and Ramaraya were won over by concessions, Qutb was defeated by Ibrahim's prime minister Azad Khan.

Having experienced invasions from time to time, Ibrahim Adil Shah's successor Ali Adil Shah walled the entire city of Bijapur. In 1580 a slave from Gulbarga assassinated Adil Shah because of a grudge he bore against the Sultan. As Adil had no issue he was succeeded by his nephew Ibrahim II who was a mere lad of nine years. Fortunately his aunt Chand Bibi, a very capable lady, was his regent. But the palace was full of intrigues and there was constant internal strife among the nobles. In 1582 Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar laid siege to Bijapur. The nobles united their forces and obliged the besiegers to retire.

In 1599, Ibrahim Adil Shah conceived the idea of transferring his capital. About 1602 he resolved to shift it from Bijapur and built palaces and gardens at Nawraspura, which was at a distance of three miles. He kept his court at Bijapur and only a few offices were in the new capital where he spent most of the time. In 1624 the new city could not withstand the invasion of Malik Amber, the minister and commander-in-chief of Ahmadnagar, and it fell an easy prey. Ibrahim died in 1627 and was succeeded by his minor son Mohammed who took the field against Ahmadnagar.

Shahjahan took advantage of the situation and sent his army against Bijapur. Mohammed Shah was unable to meet the imperial troops in the field and therefore adopted scorched earth policy. Within an area of 20 miles around the capital he destroyed all forage and provisions, emptied the water tanks, and shut himself in the fort. This was a good strategy as the enemy would not stay in desolation for long. Nevertheless the Mughuls succeeded in wringing from Mohammed an annual tribute of 26 lakh rupees and a promise not to assist Shahji the Maratha chief. From 1636 to 1656 Bijapur enjoyed comparative immunity from troubles and during these two decades

the Sultan devoted himself to erecting buildings in the city. Meanwhile Bijapur decided to deal with Shivaji once for all and sent Minister Afzal Khan. In 1659 he led an expedition against Shivaji but this proved disastrous. This was followed by an expedition from Shivaji with whom the Sultan finally came to terms and a treaty was signed.

In 1656 Aurangazeb marched from Golkunda and later laid seige to Bijapur but on hearing about his father's illness he hurried back to Delhi in 1657.

After Ali Adil Shah II's death in 1672, the state was in a disturbed condition. A large number of men from the army left to join the Mughuls and Marathas since they had not been paid arrears of their pay. Faction quarrels also broke out In 1686 when Aurangazeb with a large army attacked, Adil Shah had no alternative to making unconditional surrender. It was unfortunate that Aurangazeb commanded the Sultan to appear before him in silver chain. With this Bijapur was merged with the Mughul empire and continued to be its part till 1724, when Nizam-ul-Mulk proclaimed independence and Bijapur become part of his kingdom. In 1760 Nizam ceded Bijapur to the Peshwa. But when the Marathas took over, they stripped the palace of all its precious things and the city suffered badly. In 1818 Bijapur passed into the hands of the Raja of Satara and in 1848 it was annexed by the British.

The credit for raising the walls of the citadel in solid masonry goes to Ali Adil Shah. Yusuf Adil Shah built several parts and Ibrahim rebuilt the citadel and added to it two surrounding walls and two ditches and a garden between the two. He also built the Ghalib (victorious) mosque with 1303 niches.

City

Bijapur city is strongly fortified by a wall about 6-mile long, 106 bastions, five main gates and a 40 to 50 feet broad and 20 feet deep ditch. The gates are Bahmani, Fately, Alipur, Shahpur and Mecca. The fort has a number of guns of which a few famous ones are mounted on gateways. Some of these are : Malik-i-Mardan (the March of the Field), the Land Qassab (the largest gun cast in gun metal or some alloy with a small power chamber which gives it greater thickness), the Mustafabad. The Feringi Burj accommodates sereval pieces of cannon—one before each embrasure and mounted upon blocks of masonary and each provided with a universal joint so that it might be quickly turned about and pointed in any direction.

The citadel, popularly known as Ark Qila, situated in the centre of the city was more used as a royal residence than a citadel proper. Nearly circular, its perimeter is less than one mile and is a treasure house of artistic buildings, including palaces, arches, tombs, cisterns, gateways, minarets all carved with rich brown basalt rock. The defences consist of strong curtain with several massive bastions and a rampart mound and a ditch.

The citadel has a number of interesting buildings, of which the most important is Gole Gumbaz, the tomb of

Mohammed Ali Shah. The dome is of very large size, its internal diameter is about 125 feet which is second only to St. Paul's (in Rome) which is 139 feet. It could not be completed by the Sultan in his reign of 35 years The other buildings are Jama Masjid (1576); Gagan Mahal (1561)—Hall of Assembly and private appartments; Sat Mandir –a palace for retirement of princesses—it has water reservoirs on different floors and its walls are painted with human figures and other objects.

Afghan Forts

23. MANDU

THE historic fort of Mandu, about 22 miles from Dhar, stands on the summit of a flat-topped Vindhya hill, 2079 feet above sea level.

The fort is formed of the entire hill, round which runs a battlemented wall nearly 23 miles in circuit. The fort has ten gates, several of which bear inscriptions referring to their erection or repair. The main entrance is by the Garhi Darwaza (carriage gate) on the north, close to the Delhi Gate.

Practically nothing is known about the early history of Mandu. However, it is certain that Ala-ud-din Khalji after reducing Chitor in 1303 sent an army under his confident chamberlain Ain-e-Mulk to Malwa whose ruler Rai Mahalak Dev was defeated and slain some time towards the close of 1305. Thereafter for a century Mandu was governed by Muslim chiefs under the authority of Delhi. But in 1401 Dilawar Khan became independent of Delhi. In 1405 he was succeeded by his son Hoshang Shah, a man of restless spirit, and in 1435 by his grandson Ghazni Khan. However, the very next year his minister Mohammed Khan usurped the throne and founded the Khalji dynasty of Mandu.

Mahmud Khalji fought against Ahmad Shah I of Gujarat, Mohammed Shah of Delhi, Mohammed Shah Bahmani III and Rana Kumbha. He failed in his contests with Muslim Sultans but his war with Rana was indecisive as appears from the fact that both Mahmud Khalji and Rana Kumbha built 'tower of victory' in Mandu and in Chitor, their respective capitals. Mahmud died in 1469 and he was succeeded by Ghiyasuddin, Nasiruddin and Mahmud II. Mahmud II was defeated and captured by Rana Sanga but was restored to his kingdom. But he soon incurred the hostility of Rana Ratan Singh of Chitor and Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. The latter in 1531 captured Mandu and for the next four years it was under the hold of Gujarat and then it was occupied by Humayun. That very year (1536) Mallu Khan under the title of Kadri Shah, seized the fort of Mandu and established an independent kingdom of Malwa. But in 1542 he was deposed by Sher Shah. Malwa was placed under Sher Shah's general Shujaat Khan whose son and successor Bayzid or Baz Bahadur assumed independence.

Baz Bahadur is remembered for his skill in music and for his romantic attachment to the beautiful and accomplished singer Rupmati.

In 1561-62 Mandu was conquered by the Mughul generals and incorporated in the Mughul empire. Mandu became the headquarters of a Sarkar in the

Suba of Malwa. It had taken Akbar's army six months to capture the fort when parts of the city were destroyed. Akbar visited Mandu in 1564 and again in 1598.

Emperor Jahangir stayed at Mandu for some time in 1617 and was accompanied by Sir Thomas Roe who describes his sojourn at great length. The old palaces were got repaired at a cost of rupees three lakhs for his and his relatives' use. Nurjahan killed a tiger here which roused the emperor's admiration. He visited Mandu again in 1620. In 1625 Prince Khurram (later Shahjahan) while in rebellion against his father took refuge in Mandu.

From 1696 for a short period the Marathas held Mandu. In 1732 it passed into the hands of the Raja of Dhar. After independence Dhar was merged with Madhya Bharat which became part of Madhya Pradesh.

Inside the fort are numerous mosques, palaces, tombs, and dwelling houses, all more or less in a state of decay, but many of them are magnificent specimens of Pathan architecture.

The principal buildings are: the Hindola Mahal—a massive structure with steep sloping buttresses; the picturesque Jahaz Mahal (ship palace) so called because of its overhanging a lake; the Jama Masjid planned and begun by Hoshang Shah and completed by Mahmud Khalji; the tombs of Hoshang Shah and Mahmud Khalji I; foundation of 7-storeyed Tower of Victory raised by Mahmud Khalji in 1443, the palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati. Below the latter building flowed the Narmada.

24. ROHTASGARH

ROHTASGARH, picturesquely situated on the outlying spur of the Kaimur Hills in Bihar, was the favourite refuge for the families and treasuries of personages like Sher Shah, Shahjahan, Nawab Mir Kasim Ali and Amar Singh, brother of Kuar Singh of Jagdishpur. Ferista considered Rohtasgarh as the largest and strongest hill fort of India and none to compare with.

Rohtasgarh, traditions point out, derived its name from prince Rohitashwa, son of Harishchandra of the solar race whose home and stronghold it was and that the autochthonous race continues among the Kharwas, Cheros and Oraons. The Kharwas assert that like Rohitashwa they too have descended from the Sun and are *Suryavamshis*; the Cheros claim that they held the plateau till they sallied forth for the conquest of Palamau; and the Oraons claim that Rohtasgarh originally belonged to their chief and that it was wrested from them in a night raid at the time of their national festival

when their men were under the influence of intoxication and their womenfolk were left to fight.

The earliest historical reference to Rohitashwa is found in the Phulwari rock cut inscription of A.D. 1169 which states that the fort was in the possession of Pratapadhavala, the Chief of Jupila of Khayarava Lavanga—a name that has survived in 'Kharwas'.The other record contained in an inscription near Lal Darwaza of the fort dated A.D. 1223 recalls excavation of a well by one Madhav in the reign of Pratap (short of Pratapadhavala). For protection the Raja cut a moat across Kathauliya, a narrow neck joining Rohtas to the tableland.

In 1538 Sher Shah took Rohitashwa by strategem from the Hindu rulers. Having revolted against Humayun and having lost Chunar, Sher Shah was determined to get possession of Rohtasgarh. As the fort was impregnable, he decided to secure it by strategem. He begged the Raja for protection for his family and his treasures while he was engaged in the conquest of Bengal. When the Raja consented, Sher Shah sent several hundred *dulis*, first few of which carried a few old women and the remainder hiding Afghan soldiers and arms. When a few leading *dulis* in the train were examined at the outer gate and found containing only women, the remainder were not checked and were allowed to enter the fort. When inside the fort, the Afghans sprang up and attacked the guards who were easily overpowered. The Raja fled away leaving Sher Shah master of the fort.

Before proceeding to campaign against Humayun, Sher Shah left his women and children and treasury in the secure retreat with a strong garrison of ten thousand matchlock men. Of Sher Shah's time today there are only two buildings left, viz. Jama Masjid with three domes and the Rauza of Nawabkhan.

Later the fort passed into the hands of the Mughuls. Akbar appointed Mansingh as a viceroy of Bengal and Bihar. The new viceroy selected Rohtas for his stronghold and constructed in 1597 a beautiful extensive palace for residence. The palace (Mahal Serai) is an irregular medley of buildings extending from north to south through a great courtyard and enclosed by high walls. Inside the chief gate of the palace (known as Hathi Darwaza) were quarters for the troops. The Barahdari (the Hall of audience) is the best preserved building. Towards the centre of the palace is Aina Mahal, the residence of the governor's wife. Governor's residence (Takht Padshahi) is another imposing building. Ten years later Mansingh strengthened the fort by repairs and added massive works consisting of two gates on the northern side of the neck of land connecting Rohtas hill with the Rehal hills in the west. The gates and the ditch are commanded by double line of ramparts and bastions which rise along a low hill tower 60 or 70 feet above the moat. On Mansingh's death Rohtasgarh was attached to the office of the Wazir of the emperor and was placed under a *kiledar* who had a guard of 4 to 5 men and defrayed all expenses from the revenue of his estates. Besides, about four thousand matchlock men guarded

different parts of the plateau. As the place was not very healthy, these men were recruited from outside and were regularly relieved. The garrison consisted of artillery men who were permanently settled with their families in a village near the palace and was inured to the climate.

The *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to the fort in glowing terms. It had a circuit of 14 *kos* (28 miles) and the enclosed land, with water from springs and tanks in abundance, was cultivated. It was said that if a peg was driven into the ground or a hole was dug, it welled up at once. The garrison, keeping this in view, was changed every four months. According to other chronicles the steep ascent of the fort was guarded by three gates, one above the other, and was defended by guns and netting stones.

When Prince Khurram (later Shahjahan) rebelled against his father Jahangir he left behind his family in the fort where they were well protected by the governor of Rohtasgarh. In the time of Shahjahan, it is stated, the walls covered a length of 24 miles and had four gates, viz. Ghoda ghat, Kathauliya ghat, Rajghat and Mendhra ghat.

From the Mughul hands the fort passed on to the Nawabs of Bengal. In 1763 Nawab Mir Kasim, on defeat from the East India Company at Udaynala, despatched his wife with seventeen hundred other women and children and much treasure to Rohtas. But on his final defeat at Buxar, the Begam left the place and Shah Mal, the Dewan, peacefully surrendered the fort to the English who destroyed all military stores.

In 1857 the tranquillity of Rohtasgarh was broken when Amar Singh and his followers infested its neighbourhood and intended to hold the place to use it as a rallying point. A company of 250 men was raised to occupy the fort and the garrison remained there. Quite a few sharp melees took place in the neighbourhood of Rohtas.

Some of the striking features of Rohtasgarh are its gates and buildings. There is a series of gates one after another. There are two main gates, Kathauliya Darwaza—quite imposing and strong and defended by massive masonary bastion surrounded by a ditch—and the Lal Darwaza, which continues to be in good shape.

Prominent amongst Indian buildings are Mahal Serai which is the largest and the most imposing building in the fort. Amongst other buildings in the palace are: Baradari, Rang Mahal, throne room, flower garden, Zenana Mahal, the Nach-Ghar, Phool Mahal, Diwan-i-Am.

There are a few temples of ancient times, for instance Rohtas temple situated on a small peak approached by a long flight of 80 steps. Till Aurangazeb destroyed the image, Rohtas was worshipped in the temple. Other temples are Harish Chandra and Ganesh.

Rohtasgarh is one of the strongest forts in the eastern part of the country and in spite of its weaknesses it gave protection to kings and others as security to their treasures.

25. CHUNAR

THE fortress of Chunar, in eastern Uttar Pradesh, stands on a steep rock of the Vindhyas. Bounded on all sides by an escarpment it has a circumference of 2400 yards. It is 800 yards long and 133 to 300 yards broad and stands 80 to 175 feet above its surroundings. It juts out into the Ganga and in her waters the successive enclosures of the walls and towers of the fort reflect like a castle.

Chunar appears to be derived from *Charan-adri* or 'footsteps hill'. Tradition accounts it to some saint of the *Dwapar yug* who stepped from the Himalayas and rested his foot upon this hill which led to its mark.

There are numerous tales about the origin of Chunar Fort. The earliest one is about Bhartrinath, brother of Vikramaditya of Ujjain, who selected this solitary wooded rock as the site for his hermitage. Vikramaditya is said to have discovered the site with the help of hermit Gorakhnath. Another story tags it with Prithviraj after whose death the fort was taken by one Khairuddin Subuktagin but it was regained by Swami Raja, who put an inscription on the gateway to commemorate the event. However, the fort was finally acquired by the subordinates of Shahab-ud-din, who appointed an African as *Sanidi* and a Bahelia with a title of Hazari to be the governor and commandant of the fort.

In 1452 Mahmud Khalji annexed a large part of Chunar district. About 1490, Sikandar Lodi while passing from Jaunpur marched to Chunar but he was not strong enough to siege the fortress.

In the 16th century the Pathans and the Mughuls contested for mastery of the east. Because of its strategic location the fortress of Chunar became a key place. In 1529 Babur visited this place and lost many soldiers as the place was infested with wild beasts. Later these soldiers were considered martyrs and tanks were erected. Sher Khan Sur, afterwards emperor of India, got the fortress of Chunar by marrying Lad Malik, the young widow of the deceased governor of the fort.

In 1531 Humayun despatched an army to invest the stronghold of Chunar and also followed himself. But before any result could be obtained, other pressing work compelled Humayun to leave the place, which gave Sher Khan time to continue with his designs.

In 1537 Humayun again attempted siege of Chunar. The brave garrison of Sher Khan battled the attack of the assailants for six months, but ultimately tactful Turkish gunner Rumi Khan succeeded in having information about the fortifications and defence of the fortress through an African slave. A floating battery was moved close to the

fort and a breach made. Though the assault on the fort was driven back, the garrison seeing the battery under repair lost heart and yielded under a promise of amnesty. But this promise was broken by one of the Mughul leaders who had the hands of several hundred gunmen struck off. The capture of Chunar was notable but the fort was recaptured by Sher Khan.

Akbar saw the fortress of Chunar in 1566 while on his tour to Benam and hunted buffalo there. In 1575 when news of his army's march towards the east reached Sher Khan, the son of Muhammad Adil Shah, he collected an army of 20,000 horse, 50,000 foot and 500 elephants. But the Mughuls gave them a crushing defeat and Akbar despatched Asaf Khan to Chunar which was still in the hands of the Afghans. The fort was surrendered on 9th August and became an outpost of the Mughul empire.

Jahangir appointed Iftikar Khan as *Nazim*.

Chunar was the one place which Raja Balwant Singh could not reduce but it fell into the hands of Nawab of Oudh.

In 1764, Major Munro made an unsuccessful attempt to assault it but it turned into blockade. The very next year it was again invested. A breach was affected on the south-western rampart which made the situation untenable and the garrison surrendered. In the same year it was exchanged for Allahabad but in 1772 it was formally ceded to the East India Company. In 1781 when Raja Chait Singh's rebellion broke out, it surrendered quitely to Hastings but this infuriated the soldiers who massacred a number of English soldiers and three sepoys. For personal safety Hastings returned to Chunar, where a force under Major Popham was collected which expelled Chait Singh from his strongholds. Hastings preferred to have his residence there for its harmonious climate. In 1791 the fort became the headquarters of the Invalid Batallion of European and Indian Troops. Such of them as were found unfit for active service were sent to Chunar for night duty though they drew the allowances of effective soldiers.

In the conflict of 1857 it was garrisoned by artillery and infantry company of European Invalid Batallion and all the district officers and European residents of Mirzapur except St. George Tucker, the Collector, who at one time sought refuge in it.

Buildings

There are several interesting buildings in the fort such as Hindu marriage hall with paintings and carvings; prison : four round holes large enough for a man to pass through; the shrine of Bhartrinath. A story goes that God is invisibly seated on the black stone in the shrine for nine hours everyday leaving the remaining three hours for Varanasi. On this account it is thought that Chunar can never be taken by an enemy except between the hours when He is out. *Hamams* were built by Sher Shah.

The western gate of the fort was built by Akbar in 1574. An inscription in Persian indicates the construction of

small rooms in the reign of Jahangir. Some time in 1674 the Barahdari, known as old Governor's House, was occupied by Hastings. This is commemorated by a tablet fixed in the wall by the order of Lord Curzon.

From A.D. 1815 onward the castle was used for confinement of state prisoners. Some of the important prisoners were Trimbakji Dainglia, Nawab Munna Jan, Badshah Begam of Oudh, Shah of Tonk.

Mughul Forts

MEDIEAVAL forts are scattered about in large number. They principally occupy the summit of high hills and are often relatively close to each other, as in the case of hill ranges of Rajputana and Maharashtra, and occupy a position in the military architecture. An important factor in their design is that, quite apart from the question of defence, they should impress the enemy with their imposing and formidable structure. They should also express the power and affluence of the ruler. The walls are of great thickness and height strengthened at short intervals by massive towers and imposing gateways. Secondly, the fortifications also laid stress on decorative ornament, e.g. gateways were covered with panelling which were moulded and had sculptured ornament. They had constructive features such as arches, corbels, and lintels and were carved in circle and elaborate designs. Surprisingly, such massive walls and towers continued to be built in India upto the middle of 18th century, though destructive power of artillery had rendered these to not much worth. Similarly, heavy pieces of guns were mounted on tall pedestals in the walls of the forts to no good use.

26. ALLAHABAD

ALLAHABAD, earlier known as the Prayag, at the confluence of the great rivers Ganga and Jamuna and the mythological Saraswati, has since times immemorial enjoyed the reputation of a holy place to which masses from all over the country flock at the time of Kumbha, an event that takes place after every twelve years. They come to pay homage to their deities and to meet the Sanyasins and others and derive solace from whatever their miseries and sorrows be. For discussion on mundane as well as non-worldly subjects helps lighten their heavy hearts. To this quest in the 16th century Akbar gave Prayag another dimension in the form of a fort for protection. The latter part of the 19th century and early part of 20th century further added to the importance of Allahabad, which name Akbar had given Prayag—Nehrus from this town turned Allahabad into a great centre of activity for the independence of the country. Allahabad Fort is just adjacent to the confluence (*Sangam*) and the mass gatherings instead of listening to religious discourses could turn their ears to the clarion call to join the struggle for independence against the British empire.

The story of the fort starts from the year 1583 when Akbar came by boat on a pleasure trip to Prayag and impressed by the *Sangam* (confluence), as also by an ulterior motive of securing the road to Bengal and an advance post for his imperialistic design of subduing the independent kingdoms of the Deccan, he decided to build a fortified city on the banks. Then on an auspicious day in the month of November Akbar laid the foundation of the city which he named Allahabad. He planned four forts with royal residences (of these only one was completed) and 12 buildings with beautiful apartments in each.

The magnificent fort, originally planned as an irregular triangle, was surrounded by a high embattled wall of red stone with three gateways, high flanking towers facing the two rivers, a deep moat protecting the main gate. William Finch says that it took 5,000 to 20,000 workmen of different denominations forty years to construct the palace of 40 pillars at Allahabad. The British made several changes which completely changed the picturesque appearance of the fort and they used it as an arsenal. Himmat Ali was the architect of the fort.

The fort of Allahabad housed many important personages. Prince Salim (later Emperor Jahangir) resided in the fort as the governor of the *Subah* while the command of the fort was in the hands of a Faujdar. In 1657 Suleiman,

son of Dara Shukoh, left his ladies and superfluous luggage in the fort. Two years later when Shuja on defeat at the hands of Aurangazeb in the battle asked Qasim Barba, governor of the Allahabad Fort, for keys of the fort, the latter refused to give him the keys. Instead he delivered these to Aurangazeb's son Mohammed Sultan.

In 1749 when the allies of the Nawab of Oudh, Pratap Narain and Baghullah Khan, learnt that Mohammed Khan Bangash with his army was advancing towards Allahabad, they took shelter in the Allahabad Fort and prepared to withstand siege. They threw open a bridge of boats on the Jamuna from the Triveni Gate of the fort to the town of Arail and posted under Baghullah Khan a strong diviser of troops at the southern end to meet the enemy. Two years later Bangash planted his guns on a mound known as Raja Harbong's Fort. The redoubtable garrison in the fort offered a gallant resistence with the help of Rajendra Giri Gosain, a Naga Sanyasi who had come to the city on pilgrimage. With his valiant disciples Gosain would fall upon the Afghans twice or thrice a day and return to their tents. When Bangash failed to take the fort, he cut off supplies to the besieged. Ali Quli Khan finally gave an open fight. Three hours of continuous cannonading put Baghullah Khan to great loss. The siege dragged on for months. But then Shadi Khan, general of Bangash was defeated and then Bangash left the place.

But having succeeded in throwing out Bangash, Shuja-ud-daula the Nawab of Oudh, wanted to acquire the fort for himself and to meet this design of his, he did not hesitate in playing foul with his cousin Mohammad Quli Khan. He persuaded the latter to leave his family and dependants in the fort and to proceed to Patna. As an assurance to Quli Khan, Shuja-ud-daula himself prepared to return to his capital ostensibly to bring his family but in reality to take a powerful army to Allahabad to siege the fort and take the province.

Nawab Shuja-ud-daula succeeded in convincing the incharge of the fort that he had come to leave his family but in the cover of escorting the ladies into the fort he captured it and arrested Nazaf Khan and his family members and dependants of Mohammed Quli Khan. He also took possession of the treasure, artillery and other things and appointed Baghullah Khan as deputy governor of the province and Ghulam Hussain Khan, one of his slaves, as commandant of the fort.

In 1764 Shuja-ud-daula was defeated at Buxar by the English and he left for Allahabad. A British officer followed him. The Nawab, the deputy governor and commander of the fort then shut themselves up in the fort with a garrison of 2000 troops and 150 pieces of guns and gave a stout resistance. However, continuous firing for six hours by the British batteries effected a breach in a wall. With this the besieged lost all hopes of provision and at the same time reinforcement allowed the English army to capture the fort one afternoon in February 1765.

On Shuja-ud-daula's death in 1775, the fort of Allahabad was given to

Asaf-ud-daula but the garrison continued to be manned by the troops of the East India Company. On 2 February 1798 the exclusive possession of the fort with all buildings and appurtenances and officers immediately dependant on the fort together with land surrounding the fort was given to the Company.

When the disturbances of 1857 broke out, the fort of Allahabad was garrisoned mainly by Indian soliders. During the period the relations between Indians and Europeans looked cordial but on 6 June at 9 p.m. at the regimental parade some of the Indian soldiers fired on the English soldiers. The Indian soldiers, except the Sikhs who were allowed to resume their posts on the ramparts, were disarmed in the fort. The garrison was in a dangerous state of insubordination and the soldiers indulged in acts of plunder. The English could, however, with the assistance of Sikh soldiers, hold the fort.

The Allahabad Fort is impressive in its massiveness but lacks the magnificence of the fort of Agra. The fact cannot, however, be ignored that it predates Agra whose architects could with gained experience effect improvements in the buildings of Agra.

27. HARI PARBAT

HARI PARBAT, the fortress, occupies a dominant position in the city of Srinagar in Kashmir and has provided for centuries, to its rulers and citizens, protection from marauders. The fortress, 250 feet above the level of the plain, between the Dal and the Anchar lakes, is enclosed by a stone wall which is three miles long, 28 feet high and 13 feet thick and has been strengthened by bastions. It has three gates—Kali on the south, Bachi on the west and Sanghin in the north-west.

Srinagar is an ancient city and was built by Pravarasen II in the beginning of the 6th century. Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese who travelled Kashmir in 631 named the place Pandrathan. Since 960 Srinagar has continued to be the capital of Kashmir. Yet it was Akbar who conceived the idea of raising protective walls during his visit to Kashmir in 1589. Akbar's visit evoked interest amongst the common men. To cite an eye witness, Suka : 'Now Jyalaludina came to see the Kingdom of Kashmir. The wives of the citizens hastened to see the King. One woman pointed out the King to her beloved friend who was anxious to see him. Another woman with threats to her child (who wanted to drink her milk) covered her breast and went (to have a view of the king).'*

Akbar constructed a city which he named Nagar-Nagar round the Hari

*Bamzai P.N.K., *A History of Kashmir*, p. 358.

Parbat and fortified it with a huge bastioned wall.

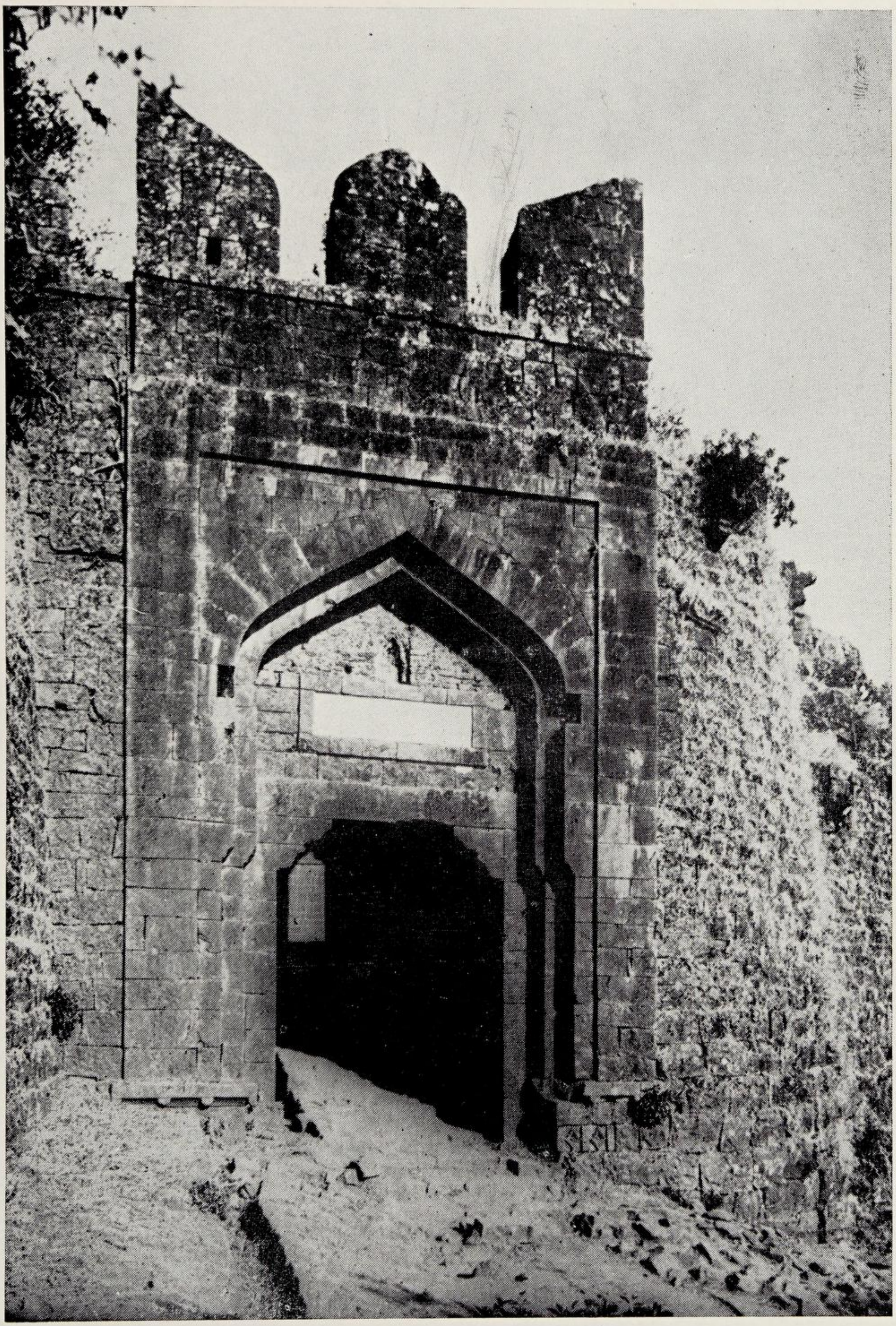
It had huge buildings and gardens of enormous size and of beautiful designs, around a palace known as Jharok-i-Shahi. Since over the centuries the Kashmiris had lost the art of handling stones and were accustomed to working in wood, Akbar imported 200 master builders from other parts of India who undertook the work under the guidance of Mohammed Quli Khan who was appointed as Governor of Kashmir by Akbar, and under the supervision of Miran Khan. When the construction was over Akbar paid a visit in May 1597 and inaugurated the new city of Nagar-Nagar. He participated in the celebrations connected with the birthday of Vitasta (Jhelum). On the 13th of the bright fortnight of Bhadon, both the banks of the river were illuminated with thousands of tiny lamps and Akbar went out on the river in a luxurious barge especially made for the occasion. The hills around Srinagar and the houses in the city were illuminated with lamps and torches. Later the palace and garden were repaired and adorned with pictures by master hands and were envy of the picture gallery of China. One thing creditable about the work was that no compulsory labour was enforced and every worker was paid his labour.

It is said that Akbar built the wall to overawe the warlike Kashmiris and to break their independent spirit. Another reason assigned is that the great wall was built to provide work for the people. Yet another explanation is that the enclosure was to house soldiers so that they remained inside and were not able to molest the local people, especially women.

Some critics have however found nothing noteworthy architecturally in the Hari Parbat. Its simple structure comprised a domed chamber in the middle with two side recesses. Its only decorations are rectangular and arched panels and two beautiful medallions in high reliefs. The Sanghin Darwaza of the three mentioned above was expensive and ornate. Its elevation consists of a wall, proportionately arched recess containing the entrance gateway, and elegant gate windows on each side.

Discontent had been brewing up among the local people against Mughuls and in 1752 the influential leaders Mir Muquim Kanth and Khwaja Zahir Didamari induced Ahmad Shah Abdali to invade Kashmir. The Afghan king disbursed a force under Abdullah Khan Ishk Aqasi. The ruler of Kashmir Abul Qasim Khan faced the invaders bravely and the fighting continued for 15 days. Ultimately Aqasi won over the Kashmir commander Gul Khan Khaibri. With a broken heart at the treachery, Abul Qasim Khan fled but was arrested and taken to Kabul. Afghans entered Srinagar and planted the Afghan standard on the ramparts of Nagar-Nagar, bringing Mughul rule in Kashmir to an end in 1752.

Later Ranjeet Singh's forces conquered Kashmir. In 1843 when Mohiuddin, governor of Kashmir died, his son Sheikh Imammudin took over. Gulab Singh regarded him a friend and sent his agent Wazir Lakhpat Rai with a small body of troops to Srinagar. Imammudin made over the fort to Rai end

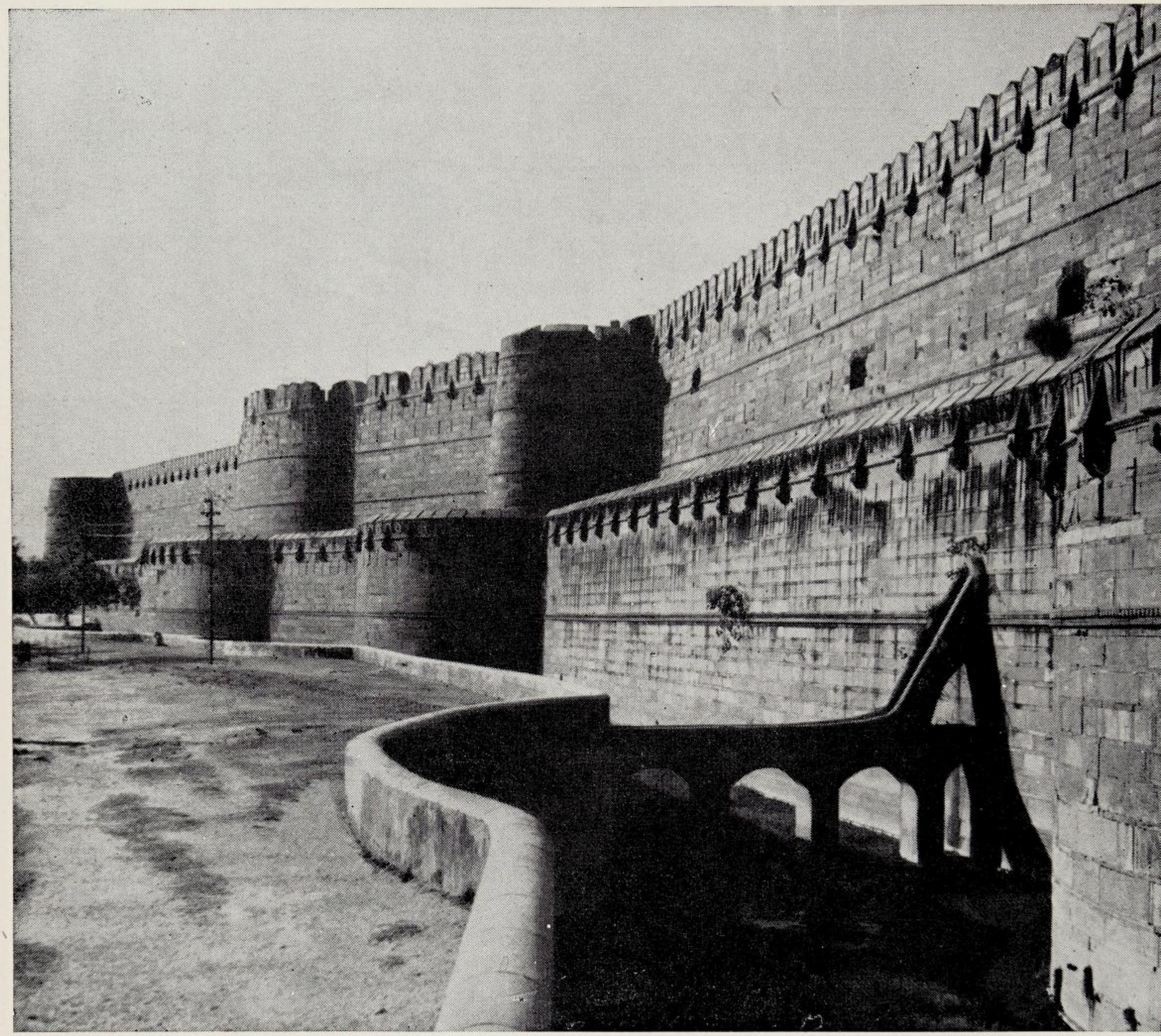


Rohtasgarh Fort : Gazi Gatę

Allahabad Fort

←*Mandu Fort : Delhi Gate*

Hari Parbat Fort



Agra Fort : Moat and outer wall

pretended to leave the country. When within the next four months Gulab Singh did nothing, he collected a large force and attacked Gulab Singh's forces at Srinagar and defeated them. With the help of the British, Imammudin besieged the survivors in Hari Pvat. But when Gulab Singh advanced towards Srinagar, Imammudin surrendered.

Hari Parbat can be approached by two roads. From the north side of the hill, the road is broad and of an easy gradient and fit for horses. The other road commands the fort on the south face and is steep and rugged.

The fort has two wings placed at an obtuse angle to each other, following the outline of the crest and also of a separate sequence of buildings with the bastion at each end, situated just below the western wing. Only the south face is pierced for musketry. Inside there are barracks for a small garrison.

There are three masonry tanks inside the fortress. Because of the limited space the garrison suffers from shelling. The fort had no ditch. The north side is weak but the lake protects it. On the east side marshy ground extends to within 400 yards of the base of the hill on which the fort is built. There was a wall enclosure besides the marshy land on this side. It appears that this is the weakest spot in the fort. From the city side the fort is easily approached.

Hari Parbat no doubt enjoys a strong position but it is to be realised that the fortifications could make no great resistence to an attacking artillery force.

Hari Parbat literally means the Hill of Vishnu—perhaps after a rock-cut sculpture devoted to Vishnu on one side of the rock. It is also known as Koh-i-maran, i.e. the hill of snakes.

28. AGRA

THE Agra Fort, also known as Lal Qila, was built by Akbar in place of Badalgarh Fort that was built many centuries earlier either by the Tomars or Chauhans.

The Badalgarh Fort was very strong as could be inferred from what in 1131 Khwaja Masud bin Sad bin Salman said about it in his *Dewan* (literary work). He observed it was built in the sand like a hill and its battlements were like hillocks. Further, no calamity had ever befallen on its fortifications nor had deceitful time dealt treacherously with it. That year when Mahmud Shah, governor of Hind, invaded Agra Jaipal, Amir of Agra, stood a tough fight but realising his weak position he offered to submit. The arrogant Shah however declined the offer saying he would prefer to storm it as he had been in search of a large, vjrgin, unconquered fortress and would not spare the Agra Fort. Agra being a strategic site for trade, a great religious centre and easy

gateway to Rajasthan, Malwa, Gwalior, etc. had but to have a strong fort.

After Mahmud Shah, Agra probably remained with the Rajputs as it does not find mention amongst the invasions of the Slave, Khalji and Tughluq dynasties. According to Syed Allauddin, Agra was a dependency of Biyana. Sikandar Lodi sent a strong force to siege Agra when Safdar Khan was in charge of the place.

In 1505 Sikandar Lodi founded a new town where the Agra city stands. There is an interesting story how the new town came to be called Agra. Mehtar Mula Khan who commanded the royal barrage observed two mounds suitable for building and asked the Sultan which *Age Rah*, i.e. one which is in advance. The Sultan smiled and replied that the town be called Age Rah or Agra.

Agra and Delhi were occupied by Babur after he defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1526. He breathed his last on 26 December 1530.

The capable general and minister of Adil Shah Sur occupied Delhi and Agra by defeating Tarqi Beg, Mughul governor, and Agra remained with Sher Shah Suri. The Second Battle of Panipat (1556) closed the contest of the Afghans and the Mughuls for supremacy and the victorious Mughuls occupied Delhi and Agra.

Akbar arrived at Agra by way of Jamuna on a Sunday in October 1558 and gave orders for the demolition of the old fort and instead build an impregnable fortress of hewn redstone worthy of the dignity of his dominion. On an auspicious day the foundation was laid.

There is, however, a tradition that asserts that Akbar only improved the old fortress of Badelgarh.

The *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* says that it took Akbar eight years (1565-73) and 35 lakh rupees to build the magnificent triangular fort. It was constructed under the superintendence of the chief engineer Muhammad Qasim Khan and in Akbar's time only its walls and gates were completed.

The fort measures about half a mile and had its circuit running into one and a half miles. It has double ramparts with broad massive circular bastions at regular intervals.

A drawbridge goes across the deep moat to the mainland and its entrance is flanked by two octagonal towers. The Agra Fort has four gates namely, Amar Singh Gate, Delhi Gate, Water Gate and a fourth, unnamed, at the north. The Delhi Gate, also known as Hathipol, was built to commemorate the capture of Chitor by Akbar in 1568. It was so planned that it gave the defenders an advantageous position. In the words of Percy Brown, the Delhi Gate, 'is undeniably one of the most impressive portals in India. The architectural device of the Amar Singh Gate would render the enemy's position very untenable'. Salim and Shahjahan could not take the fort when they rebelled in 1599 and 1622 respectively.

Aurangazeb did not lag behind in following the tradition of his family. The story starts with Shahjahan's illness in September 1657. This gave rise to confusion and the three absentee brothers suspected Dara Shukoh their eldest brother of suppressing the news

of their father's death. Aurangazeb and Murad Bakhash formed an alliance to partition the empire and their combined troops defeated at Dharmat Raja Jasvant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan who were sent by the emperor to check the advance of the two princes. The victorious princes reached Samgarh, eight miles east of Agra Fort where they defeated Dara. Soon after this, Aurangazeb marched to Agra and seized the fort, defying all efforts of Shahjahan for an amicable settlement. Shahjahan suffered most callous treatment when Aurangazeb stopped the supply of water from the Jamuna. Shahjahan wrote to Aurangazeb :

'Praised be the Hindus in all cases,
As they ever offer water to their dead.
And thou, my son art a marvellous Musalman,
As thou causest me in life to lament for (lack of) water.*

Aurangazeb turned a deaf ear and, resigned to his fate, Shahjahan passed his last days in the company of his daughter Jahanara till death relieved him of all his miseries on 1 February 1666. Aurangazeb after settling scores with his brothers had earlier crowned himself as emperor on 31 July 1658.

In March 1757 Ahmad Shah Abdali's general Jahan Khan laid siege to the fort, but the defenders never opened its gates.

Agra was captured by Jats in 1761 and while in their occupation, the fort suffered a great deal. Mahadaji Scindia laid siege to the Agra Fort. It was defended by Hamdani who surrendered to the Maratha general. The latter appropriated a property of rupees one crore. When General Lake in 1803 laid siege to the fort the Raja of Bharatpur gave 5000 cavalry for the attack. The Marathas gave a strong defence but a breach in the weak points of the fort enabled the British to capture it. They seized treasures, large quantity of ammunitions, 163 guns including the great gun of Agra which was composed of all the precious metals. 'The English general sent it down to Calcutta on a raft for onward transmission to England, but the raft capsized and the gun fell into the sandy bed of the river and there it remains.'** The fort held successfully in 1857.

When in 1868, the capital of north-west province shifted from Agra to Allahabad, Agra was reduced to a Commissioner's division. Nevertheless the Agra Fort is an important spot and whoever goes to visit the Taj—a monument of romance of an Emperor for his queen, and a dream in marble—also pays a visit to the fort. The fort abounds with buildings in the beautiful architecture of Gujarat and Bengal, most of which were constructed in Shahjahan's reign. Only two buildings, viz. Akbar Mahal and Bengali Mahal are of Akbar's time. Akbar Mahal was constructed for his concubines in three sets, called Itwar (Sunday), Mangal (Tuesday) and Zenissar (Saturday), and the Bengali Mahal was built in 1571 for his foreign women.

Jahangir also contributed a building known after him as Jahangiri Mahal. It

*Nath R., *Agra and its Monumental Glory*.
**Sidney Toy, *The Strongholds of India*.

was painted throughout in gold colour and was built for Jodha Bai. It has the blending of Hindu and Muslim styles of architecture.

Other notable buildings are :

Khas Mahal, Shah Jahani Mahal : with a tower gallery from where the king used to watch brigantines and imperial elephants fight.

Shish Mahal : (Palace of Mirror) built in 1637 served as a bath for Khas Mahal.

Anguri Bagh : attached to the palace was probably the residential quarters of imperial harem ladies.

Diwan-i-Khas : built by Shahjahan in 1636-37 for the reception of kings, ambassadors, nobles in private attendance and for the transaction of most important affairs.

Hammam Shahi : king's baths exquisitely decorated with fountains.

Nagin Masjid : built by Aurangazeb for the ladies of the *Zenana*.

Diwan-i-Am : Hall of Public Audience was used for state functions. During the British period it served as an armoury. The investiture ceremony of Amir of Afganistan was held in 1907.

Machchhi Bhavan (*Fish Palace*) : is adorned with marble fountains. Tank with gold and silver fish was stored for the amusement of the emperor.

Salimgarh : It was built by prince Salim perhaps for use as a Naubat Khana (Music Hall) for Diwan-i-Am.

Hauz-i-Jahangiri : built by Jahangir in 1611 and is associated with the emperor's wedding with Nurjahan in that year.

Muthamman Burj : of white marble. There are two deep and a few shallow recesses in each wall. The story is that Akbar used to put a jewel into one of them every morning and its finder had the luck of becoming his companion for the day.

Bangla-i-Darshan : wherefrom Shahjahan used to give *darshan* to the public every day.

Moti Masjid : The exquisite Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque built by Shahjahan in 1654 stands north of the Diwan-i-Am. It is built in pure white marble with gilded spire. It is 142 feet long and 56 feet high and is much longer than the Pearl Mosque at Delhi. It was reserved for private devotions of the emperor and the royal ladies for late midnight prayers.

Meena Bazar : This was a fancy bazar as called by Akbar, where wives and daughters of the nobles and vassals were invited to act as traders and the emperor with Begams would bargain for the handicrafts etc. on sale.

Though Agra Fort was meant to be a military structure, it gave aesthetics primary place and armament a secondary place in its architecture, though the two have been skilfully blended—battlements, embrasures etc. The buildings were devised so as to give it an aesthetic appearance. The defence experts are of the view that the stone face only gives looks of being strong but in fact it is not capable of facing fire of the modern artillery.

Maratha Forts

ALMOST all forts of Maharashtra are associated with Shivaji's name. Some of these he obtained by assault, some by strategem and still others by resort to not very fair means. He built new forts on well selected sites on the hills, defended all passes, leaving not a peak unfortified. Every taluk had at least one stronghold and the entire Maratha country was secured by a network of forts. The forts were rendered famous by deeds of bravery: Sinhgarh with Tanaji Malsure, Purandar and Vajragad with Baji, Sajjangad with Sant Ramadas.

The forts were well defended by a stout stone wall. The men were well provided with provisions. Besides, ammunition and stores were inside and there were good arrangements for water. The gateway was defended.

The defensive value of the forts was amply demonstrated during Aurangazeb's invasion.

The garrison was selected carefully. Every fort had three offices of the same status, viz. Havildar, a Maratha; Sabnis, a Brahmin; and Karkhanis, a Prabhu, who did not permit anyone to conspire against the master. The officers were transferred and had no hereditary rights. He created a reserve fund to meet extraordinary needs of the beleagured forts and another fund for the repair of the forts.

The outposts guarding the outskirts of the forts were left in charge of wild tribes who knew the jungle byways and kept vigil at night.

When Shivaji died, his kingdom was defended by 240 forts and strongholds—and not one of them was held by a hereditary noble. It was difficult to conquer a country with such impregnable forts.

29. SHIVNER

SHIVNER was in ancient times a Buddhist centre of importance as is evident from the caves assigned to a period more than 2000 years back. The remains of rock-cut steps and fine water system on the hill also indicate that the place was well settled. But more than for its caves or water system, it is famous as the birth place of Shivaji.

Shivner is a hill fort of the town of Junnar, Pune District in Maharashtra. It is triangular in shape and entrance to it is from south-west side of the hill which is broken and about halfway up has been strengthened by outworks and bastioned walls. The fort stretches about a mile across the plains and could also be reached through its seven fine spiral gates which were very strong and well defended. To the right of the entrance are mud walls of a strong fortified enclosure. The important buildings inside the fort are a prayer hall, a tomb and a mosque. There is also a spot overhanging the scarp where executions took place.

It is known that Shivner was in the possession of the Yadavas of Devagiri. After disintegration of their kingdom and later on weakening of the Delhi Sultanate in the 15th century it passed into the hands of the Bahmani kings. In 1595 the Bahmani king Bahadur Nizam Shah II ennobled the Maratha chief Maloji Bhonsale, grandfather of Shivaji, and gave him *inter-alia* Shivner and Chakan. Shivaji was born in this fort and here he grew up under the supervision of his mother Jijabai and a confident Dadaji Khonddev. It was Shivner which infused in Shivaji a spirit of adventure and boldness. (Opinions about the birth date of Shivaji are divided. According to some he was born in 1627 and others hold it 1630.)

In 1673 an English traveller Fraze visited Shivner and found it invincible. It was well stocked with provisions that could last a thousand families for seven years. According to him the governor was a Brahmin turned Muslim, and most of the horse was Mughul and the foot Hindu.

In 1716 Sahu demanded the return of Shivner from the Mughuls but to no success. They, however, succeeded in regaining the fort later and in 1762 Shivner formed part of the territory of Raghunath Rao. In 1818 Shivner passed into the hands of the British.

30. SINHGARH

SINHGARH is the name Shivaji gave to the fort which was earlier known as Kondana and was perhaps built by the Yadavas.

Sinhgarh is situated on the eastern side of the Sahyadri range of hills. With this hill it communicates on the east and west by very high narrow ridges. The south and north present huge rugged mountains. From the summit, when the atmosphere is clear, is seen to the east the narrow beautiful valley of Neera, to the north a great plain in the fore-front of which Pune* is conspicuous, to the south and west are masses of rolling mountains and in that quarter lies Raigarh, the famous fort associated with the name of Tanaji.

Sinhgarh is one of the highest points of Sinhgarh-Bhateshwar range 4322 feet above sea level and about 2,300 feet above the plain. On the north and south, Sinhgarh is a huge rugged mountain with a very steep ascent of nearly half a mile. From the slope rises a great wall of black-rock more than 40 feet high, crowned by nearly ringed fortifications. The fort is approached by pathways and gates. The Poona gate is at the end of a winding ascent up a steep rocky spur, the Kalyan gate is to the south west and stands at the end of a less difficult ascent guarded by three gateways all strongly fortified and each commanding the other. The outer fortifications, which consist of a strong stone wall flanked with towers enclose a nearly triangular space about two miles round. The north face of the fort is naturally strong but the south face is weak and it was stormed by the enemy at this point. Sir Richard Temple says that its black steep rock formed an absolute steep wall, 'I know that precipice wall, and so do many others and it is truly an awful one'.**

There is abundant water inside the fort. In the citadel are as many as 648 tanks and a number of temples and shrines.

No definite date to the foundation of Sinhgarh has been assigned. From the lotuses carved on the three gateways of the Poona Darwaza it has been surmised that the Sinhgarh Fort was under the Yadavas from whom the Mohammedans took it. According to an Urdu poem of 1350, Kondana was taken by Mohammed Tughluq from the Yadava chief Nag Naik in 1323. But according to the Gazetteer Nag Naik bravely opposed for eight months a blockade in 1340 by Mohammed Tughluq who had to return.

In 1486 Kondana fell to Malik Ahmed, the founder of Ahmadnagar. Later Shahji, father of Shivaji, held it

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*Old spelling—Poona.

**Kamalapur, J.N. *The Deccan Forts.*

Shivner Fort : Gate No. I

Sinhgarh Fort : Gate No. II

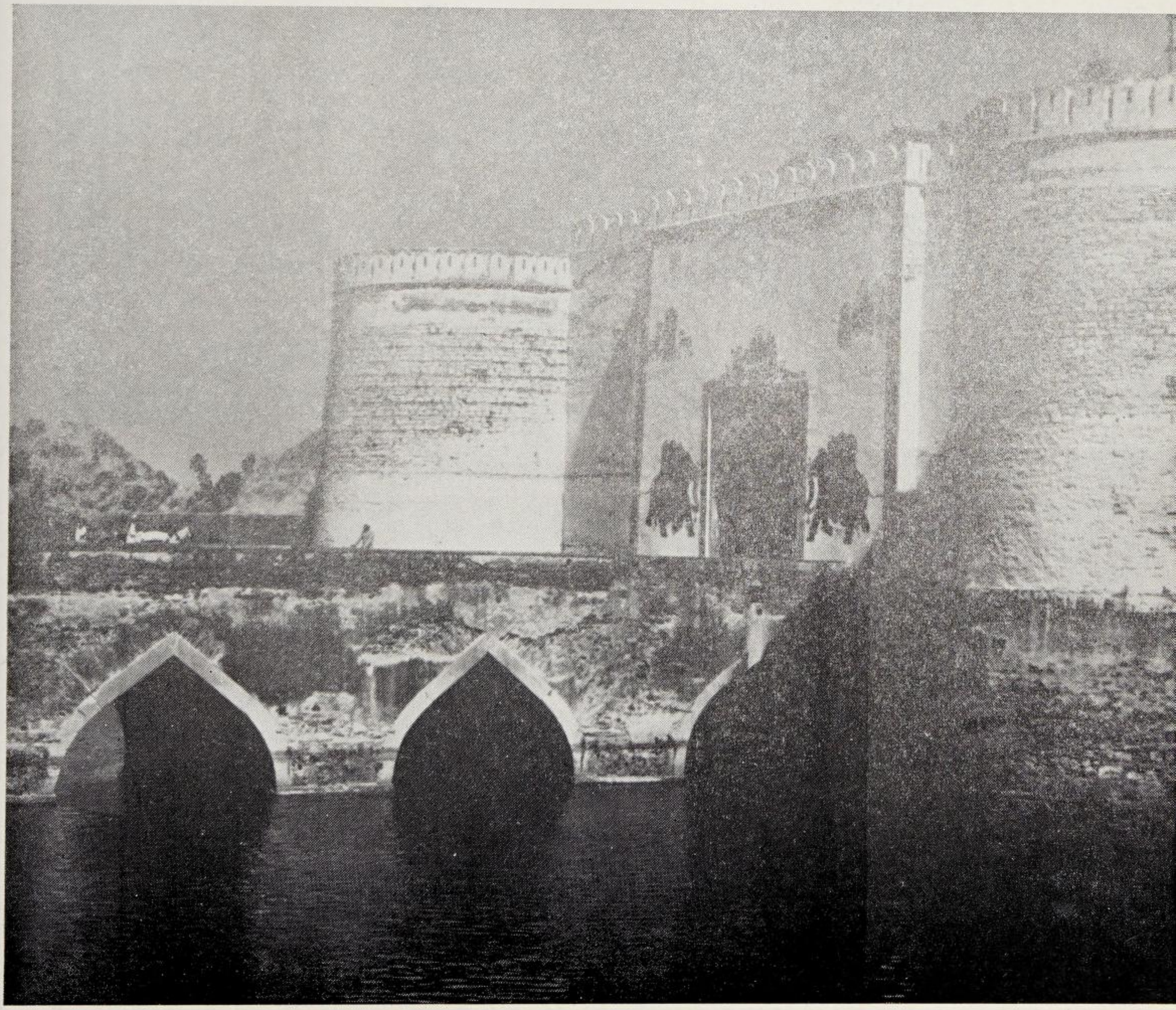
Raigarh Fort : Closed passage on west of Asta Pradhan's quarters

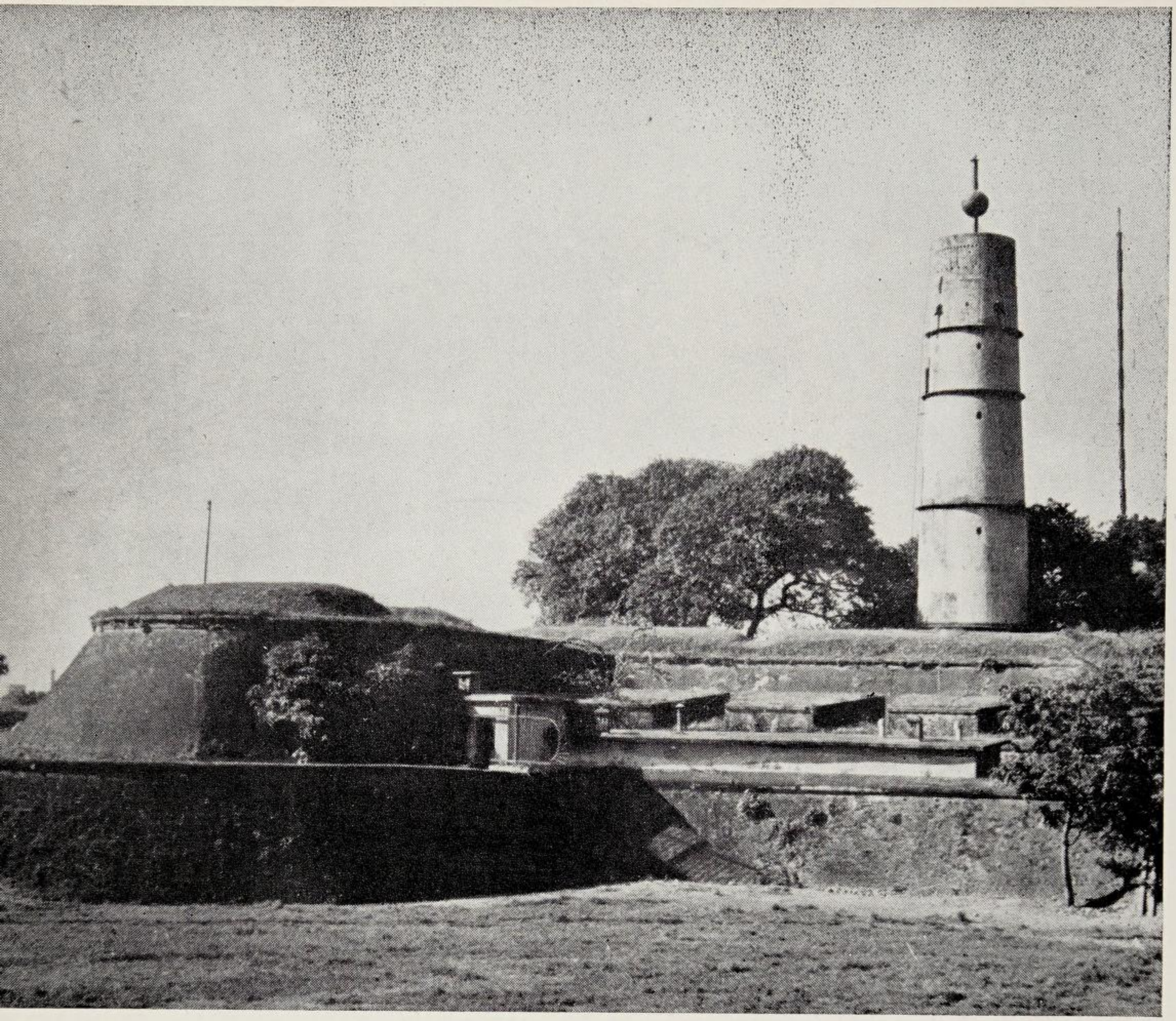
Panhala Fort : Tin-darwaza, outer gate

Seringapatam Fort : Dungeons where British prisoners of war were kept by Tippu Sultan

Gingee Fort : Rajgir hill and fort with ancient water tank in the foreground

Bharatpur Fort





Gole Ghur in Fort William, Calcutta

for the king of Ahmadnagar. In 1633 Jijabai, mother of Shivaji, was taken prisoner by the governor of Trimbak but was released and carried to Kondana. As a regent for the Ahmadnagar king, Shahji held Kondana along with other Pune forts. In 1637 Shahji entered into the service of Bijapur and with him the Kondana fort too passed on to Bijapur. In 1647 Shivaji took Kondana by bribing a Mohammedan commandant and he changed the name of the fort to Sinhgarh, i.e. 'Lion's Den'.

In 1662 when the Mughul army under Shayista Khan neared Maratha territory, Shivaji fled from Supa to Sinhgarh and from there made his celebrated surprise attack on Shayista Khan's residence at Pune. The next morning a batch of Mughul horse charged towards the fort and attacked, which threw the Marathas into confusion and disarray. Shivaji's cavalry, however, fell on them and they took flight. The first line of the Mughul cavalry was chased away by the Marathas. The second attack to lay siege to Sinhgarh also proved unsuccessful.

In 1665 when the Mughul forces blockaded Sinhgarh, Shivaji submitted. In 1670 it was taken by Tanaji Malsure—considered as one of the most daring exploits in Maratha history. Sinhgarh was then commanded by a celebrated soldier with the choicest of Rajputs garrisoned and the fort was considered impregnable. Security had however made the garrison somewhat negligent and Shivaji formed a plan for a surprise attack on the fort. He sent a force under Tanaji who was accompanied by Suryaji, his younger brother. Tanaji directed his companions to set out by different paths known only to them. This led them near the fortress and on the 9th night of the dark half moon in the month of Magh, Tanaji divided his men. One half remained at a distance with orders to advance if necessary and the other half lodged themselves undiscovered at the foot of the rock. Tanaji sent up a *gorpar*—a large iguana lizard—with a light cord round it. The creature reached the top and when it twitched and clung firmly to the rock, a light youth climbed up with its assistance. The Mawalis quietly ascended with Tanaji when something attracted the attention of the Rajputs and one of them advanced towards them. He was immediately brought down by the Mawalis and Tanaji's party dashed forward to be met by a large party of Rajputs. A fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. In a duel Tanaji fell and on seeing this the Marathas started losing courage. Then his brother Suryaji inspired them and the Marathas fought very bravely. The Rajputs submitted to Suryaji. The victorious party arranged a bonefire which was a signal of success to Shivaji watching from Raigarh. When morning broke, it was found that over a thousand Mawalis and 600 Rajputs has been killed. It was on this victory that Shivaji said with a heavy heart, 'I have gained a fort but lost Tanaji'.*

In 1703 Aurangazeb besieged the fort and succeeded in taking it. In 1706 as soon as the Mughul troops marched out of Pune, Shankraji Narayan Sachiv,

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*Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. 18, Part 3.

chief manager of the country, retook Sinhgarh. The loss of the fort was of great grief to Aurangazeb and he sent Zulfikar Khan to take Sinhgarh again. This time for want of provisions the Marathas yielded but as soon as the Mughuls left, the hill was again taken by Shankraji Narayan.

In 1750 Tarabai went to her husband Rajaram's tomb at Sinhgarh and tried to persuade the Pant Sachiv (commandant) to declare her as head of the Maratha empire.

The same year Balaji Peshwa arranged that the Pant Sachiv should give him Sinhgarh for the forts of Tung and Tikona. He called both Tarabai and Pant Sachiv to Pune. Tarabai was treated with respect but the Pant Sachiv was imprisoned. The Maratha king Ram Raja was now under the control of the Peshwa.

In 1802 Bajirao Peshwa fled to Sinhgarh. On his defeat by Yashwantrao Holkar, he bound himself to subsidise six battalions of sepoys and to give rupees 25 lakhs as yearly tribute.

In 1817 the fort was restored to Peshwa when he agreed to sign the Poona treaty. Finally Singharh fell to the British force under General Pritzfer on 2 March 1818. The fort was held by 1500 men. On 20 February the investment was started. On 24th the batteries opened fire at daybreak. Besiegers returned the fire briskly. On 3 March terms for surrender were agreed. The attack was from the south face which was the weakest. Large quantities of arms and ammunition and vast amount of wealth in the form of cash, pearls and diamonds were found in the fort. It is said that for several days many soldiers carried hats full of pearls, diamonds and ornaments above their heads for sale without knowing what the value of their possession was.

31. RAIGARH

RAIGARH, or the Royal Fort, stands 2851 feet above the sea level but unlike Sinhgarh it does not present a striking feature in the landscape, for the lofty line of the Sahyadri at the back and blocks of hills around subdue its prominence. The finest view of the fort can be had from the 1000 feet higher Torana Peak or from Pacad at the foot of the fort from where the view of the gigantic citadel is awe-inspiring. Raigarh can be reached from Pune which is at a distance of four miles from Chhatri Nizampur, and therefrom a descent of a mile and half to Vadi at the foot of the fort.

Raigarh was originally known as Raivi, the short form of Rajgiri. The history of Raigarh takes one back to the 12th century when it was the seat of a petty Maratha chief, Raja Sirke. The Marathas are said to have

acknowledged the supremacy of the Vijayanagar kingdom but in 1436 Alauddin Shah Bahmani II made Raivi his tributary. In 1479 it passed on to the Nizamshahi rulers of Ahmadnagar in whose possession it remained till 1639 when the Mughuls conquered it. The Mughuls made it over to the Adilshahi kings of Bijapur.

Shivaji captured Raivi in 1656. In 1662 while camping there he was impressed by its strategic location, its flat top—a mile by a mile and a half—was not too large to guard against surprise attacks and he decided to have his capital there. Shivaji changed its name to Raigarh. It was close to a highway of trade, had easy access to the Deccan and provided safe retreat to the island forts of Ratnagiri.

Shivaji ordered Abaji Sondev, the governor of Kalyan, to furnish the fort with a set of royal and public buildings. Three hundred stone houses, including palaces, mansions, offices, graneries, magazine quarters, garrison of 2000 men, a market nearby and rock-cut masonry system and defences were prepared which made reach for friends easy but impossible for enemies.

In 1667 a Portuguese envoy Martin visited Raigarh to conclude a treaty with Shivaji. In 1672 several prisoners of rank from his conquest of Chakan were sent to Raigarh where they were treated well and were allowed to leave or remain in service.

In 1674 Shivaji was crowned with splendour at Raigarh. The capital was well guarded. While the mountains provided natural protection the narrow gates guarded the access which was strengthened by massive high walls and bastions. The fort was impregnable unless betrayed.

Shivaji passed away in 1680. At the time of his death his eldest son Shambhuji was in Panhala and therefore his funeral rites were performed by his younger son Rajaram. Soyarabai, Rajaram's mother, wanted her son to succeed and kept the death a secret. It was planned that the State be administered under a regency in the name of Rajaram. Khandoji was sent to Panhala to put Shambhuji under arrest. The garrison of Raigarh was strengthened and 10,000 horse were stationed at the foot of the fort. But Khandoji disclosed the scheme to Shambhuji who marched towards Raigarh. Before he could reach the capital, the garrison rose in his favour and Shambhuji placed all opponents under arrest and secured possession of Raigarh.

In the meantime the supporters of Rajaram tried to enter into league with Akbar the Mughul prince, who in 1681 had sought Maratha protection. Akbar was unwilling to offend Shambhuji and apprised him of the conspiratorial activities. Shambhuji took revenge on the conspirators but Shambhuji had also to face the Sidi of Janjira and the Portuguese. In 1684 he fell prey to the Mughul general Sheikh Nizam who arrested and brought him before Aurangazeb. During this period (between 1681 and 1683) Rajaram was confined to Raigarh and lived on terms of peace with Shambhuji's wife Yesubai and her son. A Mughul force under Elikad Khan with

the aid of Sidi laid siege to the fort on 25 March 1689. The siege made little progress. It was, however, surrendered on 18 October 1689 and the family of Shambhuji was sent to Aurangazeb's camp where it was well received. Raigarh was named Islamabad and was given to Sidi with strict orders to defend it against any attempt of the Marathas. Aurangazeb called Shambuji's son as Shahu.

In 1734 on the expiry of Sidi Surul Khan, the Marathas got an opportunity to recapture Raigarh. The same year it was formally ceded to them by a treaty. Shahu appointed Yeshwant Mahadev Potnis as the chief *kiledar*.

His successor Kiledar Vitthal Yeshwant showed disinclination to obey Narayan Rao Peshwa. It was feared that he wanted to give the possession of the fort to *sidi*. When asked by Narayan Rao to surrender the fort the *kiledar* replied that he held the fort for Ram Raja of Satara, and until the latter was released, he would not make it over to Peshwa. But when an order from Ram Raja was produced and the *kiledar* received 40,000 rupees, the Peshwa got possession of the fort. It was used for keeping important prisoners and also to guard the activities of the *sidi*.

Sakharam Babu, the great rival of Nana Phadnavis, was kept as a prisoner in Raigarh Fort till his death. In 1796 Nana Phadnavis repaired the fort. In October 1802 Yeshwant Rao Holkar took the fort with little resistance but it was restored to Peshwa the following year. When in 1817 Bajirao Peshwa decided to break with the English, he sent his wife Varanasibai with much property to Raigarh. The English wanted to capture places of strength in Kolaba and therefore established a camp near Raigarh. The fort was bombarded. A passport was offered to Varanasibai but she refused to leave the fort. On the 11th day of the siege a great fire broke out in the fort. After some time it was agreed that the garrison of 100 Arabs and 800 Maratha families might be allowed to leave the fort and to live in Pune, but the commandant Saikh Abud, the Arab, would remain with the English as a hostage. The Peshwa's wife could leave the place with her private property. The garrison left, taking nothing except their own property. The company's troops took possession of the empty fort. Inside the fort everything, including Shivaji's palace was in ruin. After that Raigarh lost its glamour.

32. PANHALA

PANHALA is also associated with Shivaji and played an important role in the history of the Marathas.

The Panhala Fort stands on the summit of a spur of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra. The uplands are 2,772 feet above sea level and about 275 feet of the hill-top was crowned by the Panhala Fort which is four and a half miles in circumference.

Panhala has a long history. It is said that the fort was the seat of the sage Parasar whose rock-cut cave to its south can still be seen.

The Panhala Fort is ascribed to Silhara Bhoja Raja of the eleventh century, and a small citadel on the summit bears his name. In the 15th century when the Bahmani kings captured Panhala, they installed gateways of which the Teen Darwaza with tracery work on the jambs and architrave is a unique specimen.

In 1489 when the Adilshahi dynasty established itself at Bijapur, they fortified the Panhala Fort with great care. In 1659 Shivaji, immediately after the murder of Afzal Khan, captured Panhala. In July 1660 Shivaji was invested in the Panhala Fort by a Bijapur force under Sidi Jauhar and was forced to evacuate it. Later it changed hands and came under Mughul rule when Sambhuji was taken prisoner by Aurangazeb's general at Sangameshwar in Ratnagiri. However, it did not remain long with them. In 1701 Ramachandra Pant retook it from the Mughuls. In 1705 Tarabai, the widow of Rajaram, made Panhala her headquarters but the seat of the government was moved to Kolhapur only in 1782. The *ambarikhana* of Panhala with its three enormous stone and cement granaries named after the holy streams Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati was designed to hold 2,50,000 *khandis* of grain.

About 1827 the British took possession of Panhala. In 1844 during the minority of Shivaji IV it was taken by rebels. They seized the Resident of Satara Colonel Ovens, who was on tour, and imprisoned him in Panhala. A British force under General Delamotte in December 1844 reached the fort wall and took it by storm. They dismantled the fortifications and left a garrison of 1,845 militia and 100 pieces of ordnance to guard.

The fort has inside : Sambhuji's temple dedicated to Jijabai, and a shrine of a saint, Sadhoba by name.

South Indian Forts

33. SRIRANGAPATAM

'YOU have already been informed of my arrival on the borders of the Red Sea with an innumerable and invisible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England. I eagerly embrace this opportunity of testifying to you the desire I have of being informed by you by the way of Muscat and Mocha, as to your political situation.

I would even wish you could send some intelligent person to Suez or Cairo, possessing your confidence, with whom I may confer.

May the Almighty increase your power and destroy your enemies.'
—Napolean Bonaparte*

Napolean wrote the above letter in reply 'to the magnificent, our greatest friend' Tippu Sultan's letter seeking his military assistance to drive away the English from the country.

Tippu had no doubt enemies who conveyed the information to the East India Company's Governor at Madras. And then the English deployed all their forces to crush the Sultan in his capital in Srirangapatam, which is formed by two branches of the river Cauvery.

Srirangapatam has a long past. In 894 a person named Tirumalaiya founded on an island of the Cauvery two temples, one of Ranganath and another smaller one of Tirumal Deva, and built a wall encircling the two temples. After the deity the place was named Srirangapuram or Srirangapatam. But according to some the town of Srirangapatam was founded in 1120 by Udayaditya, brother of Vishnuvardhana. The fortress was built in 1454 by Timmanna, the lord of Nagamangala, with the permission of the king of Vijayanagar. While the foundation was being dug, to his great joy and surprise, Timmanna found a treasure which enabled him to expedite the work and in gratitude he enlarged the temple of Ranganath.

Timmanna's successors ruled as vassals of Vijayanagar till 1495 when two chivalrous brothers from the north, on pilgrimage to the town, helped the local ruler, but in doing so they took over power and ousted the ruler himself. Finally one of them ascended the throne of Srirangapatam with the title of Wodeyar. His successor strengthened the fortifications and expanded the manufacture of military equipments, including cannons and gunpowder. Under the rule of Chikkadevaraya Wodeyar the State prospered.

On his death his son Kanthirana Nassaraja succeeded to the throne. Taking advantage of the situation Aurangazeb's governor in South attacked

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*Josyer, G.R., *History of Mysore and the Yadava Dynasty*, p. 65.

and he had to buy peace by paying one and a half crore rupees. On his death in 1714 his minor son succeeded. In 1724 followed an attack and siege to the fort by Sadulla Khan, the Nawab of Arcot with the support of the Nizam, and this time again the Wodeyar had to buy peace on payment of rupees one crore. This had a sobering effect on the ruler who took steps to strengthen fortifications and in 1725 he successfully repulsed an attack by Peshwa Bajirao I who said in desperation, 'Oh, it was not Srirangapatam but Ferringapatam', meaning the velocity of the battle was like a battle with the *feringis*, i.e. foreigners.

Three decades later in 1757 the Marathas tried to avenge the defeat. The Wodeyar had to surrender some northern territory. But Hyder Ali the Fauzdar of Dindigul came with his army and routed the Marathas. But the latter soon afterwards came in greater strength and this time Hyder Ali, now Wodeyar's general, had to buy peace on payment of rupees 32 lakhs. But soon Hyder Ali gained strength and added new territories. He consolidated the kingdom and secured a stronger position for himself and completely subdued the royalty of Srirangapatam.

The English became apprehensive of Hyder Ali's power. On Hyder Ali's death in 1782 Tippu assumed power. But all the while Lakshmimani, the *Maharani* of Mysore was searching for a powerful ally who would help her to regain power. She tried to enlist the support of the English. In 1789 Lord Cornwallis came down from Bengal to direct the operations and laid siege to Srirangapatam. Tippu's position was untenable and he had to buy peace. To avenge this he entered into correspondence with Napolean to which reference has already been made. When Tirumalai Iyengar, the agent of the Maharani apprised the governor of Madras about Tippu's correspondence with Napolean, the governor deployed all the might of the English to crush the Sultan in Srirangapatam. Forces were moved from Madras and Bombay. To meet the invasion, Tippu secured the island and strengthened its double line defence works. He also repaired the western works that were in a damaged condition and improved the second line of ramparts, the ditch parallel to the existing single line and the stone glacis towards the river.

According to General Harris, Tippu's forces totalled about 21,800 men. Of these 13,750 regular infantry was posted in the fort and the remaining men were posted in the encroachment of the island. The English army under Lord Wellesley had the support of the Nizam and the Peshwa was very strong. Tippu gave a heroic battle but when he fell from a gunshot of the enemy he lost the battle.

The British concluded a treaty with the Maharani and placed the Wodeyar on the throne. That was the last significant event to take place in Srirangapatam. Later the capital was shifted to Mysore. Since the past Srirangapatam has continued to interest a sizable number of tourists who come every day to see what was once Tippu's stronghold.

34. GINGEE

ROCKS, to the ancient Indians, provided excellent base material from which they cut out varied objects ranging from massive structures to delicate figures that safeguarded their defence interests or satisfied their emotional needs.

The frescoes of Ajanta, the caves of Ellora, the rock cuts of Mahabalipuram, the temples of Trichirapally, the fortress of Gingee are some of the finest specimens of their vivid imagination and workmanship and downright earthliness.

The fortress of Gingee, about 150 km from Madras, is unique from the standpoint of defence and architecture. One of its gateways is said to have been built with such ingenuity that even a small contingent, say of ten men, could hold against an army of ten thousand invaders.

The fortress of Gingee embraces a triangle formed by three high hills namely Krishnagiri, Rajgiri and Chandradurg, which are enclosed by an outer wall. Rajgiri, 600 feet high, is the highest of these three and aloft its summit stands the citadel. It is perched on overhanging bluff of a ridge, which on three sides is surrounded by three walls 20-25 feet high and on the fourth side by a narrow but steep ravine. The high-rising rocks and the steep ravine make escalations or access to the citadel extremely difficult. The only access to the citadel from the north is by way of a timber drawbridge over the ravine at a certain point. Here the ravine was 24 feet wide and 60 feet deep. Thirty feet beyond was a narrow fortified gateway whose flanking walls were fitted with embrasures that were used for guns and musketry respectively. Each of the six other well-guarded gateways in succession made access more difficult.

Besides these three hills that form a triangle there is one more hill, known as Chakkili Durg, that also served for defence. Its summit was strongly fortified.

The fort has, besides guns, quite a few interesting monuments such as *mandaps*, temples, an eight-storied house, Kalyan Mahal for ladies of the household, a gymnasium, granary and a prisoners' well to which prisoners were consigned to starve and die. The pit is now filled with rubbish.

Water supply in a fort is always a problem. Gingee in this respect is very fortunately placed. On the summit of the citadel are two perennial springs of sweet water, and below it are three reservoirs for reception and storage of rain water. The eight-storeyed Kalyan Mahal too did not go without water.

Water was brought to it by means of an earthenware pipe from a reservior about 500 metres away and outside the walls.

Some historians are of the view that the fort was built by the Chola kings whose rule came to an end only in the 10th century A.D. Later Gingee served as a stronghold for the Vijayanagar kingdom. With the fall of Vijayanagar, its possession passed into the hands of Bahmani kings. In 1638, a combined division of the Bijapur-Golkunda army commanded by Shahji, Shivaji's father, captured it. Thirty-nine years later, in 1677, Shivaji took the fort by strategem. In 1689 Rajaram established his camp here. The very next year, the Mughul commander laid siege to it. But the Mughul forces failed to climb the fort nor could they bombard it or stop communication with outside. However, the siege continued for eight long years which affected the defenders. The campaign succeeded and the Mughuls captured a vast booty and took many prisoners, including four widows and five children of Rajaram.

The Mughuls had a standing army in Arcot and made Gingee their head-quarters. In 1750 the French under M. Bussy captured it by a daring night surprise and the fort remained in their control for 11 years. Gingee's climate is unhealthy and this too served as a deterrent for invaders. The French lost 1,200 soldiers. Then, in 1761, the English laid a siege and succeeded in capturing it after five weeks. The last time Gingee made history was in 1780 when Hyder Ali attacked it and the English force played no important role and it passed into oblivion. The ingenious use of rocks made Gingee a stronghold and provided it with maximum protection. The rock fort of Gingee is indeed one of the finest specimens of the forts in this country.

Modern Forts

35. BHARATPUR

UNLIKE most of the forts, Bharatpur in Rajasthan is situated on low-lying ground. But this has proved advantageous in times of war, for the water in the lands or hills rather than harming, when allowed to pour into the earthwork's ditch, doubly fortifies the place against the attack.

The fort of Bharatpur is a massive structure of stones of square dimension. Its high walls are surrounded by a 200 feet wide and 30 feet deep moat.

Bharatpur, named after Rama's younger brother Bharat, was founded in 1705 by Rustam, a Jat. Then it had only a small mud fort. It was from Rustam's son Khemkaran, that Surajmal took it in 1733 and built there a large fort and added the moat around the city.

The fort has two gates Choburga (i.e. a gate with four towers) and Asht Dhatu (or eight metalled gate) and eight bastions, namely Jawahir Burj, Khan Douran Khan Burj, Sinsina or Jeth Malwali Burj, the Bagar Burj, Nawal Singh Burj, Bhainsawali Burj, Gokal Ramu Risaldar Burj and the Kalka Burj. Inside, the fort has a number of palaces, one of which was built by Maharaja Balwant Singh in English style and another one is surmounted by a clock tower.

Siege of 1805

In January 1805 a British army under the command of Lord Lake laid siege to the fort. They saw a lofty mud wall and a broad ditch and thought that since they had conquered mighty forts, taking Bharatpur would b e an easy affair. The defenders on the other hand felt that defending the seven miles long walls surrounding the fort would be a problem. Nevertheless, Maharaja Ranjit Singh applied himself to the defence with utmost zeal and restitution. The defenders fought with most daring valour which the English army had not experienced elsewhere. For a few days they led desultory but vigorous bombardment but without much result. Soon a brigade under Major General Smith arrived and made a most determined assault. The bombardment caused a breach in the earthworks but the assault proved disastrous. The British lost 18 officers and 500 men ; the opposition lost only 50 men.

A Bombay division arrived and joined the fighting. But the defenders put up a bold show. Also, the explosions of mines caused disaster and heavy losses to the British who returned to their trenches.

They lost 3203 men, including officers, mostly because English guns had

become unserviceable from incessant firing. The whole of the artillery stores was expended and the wounded became very nervous. Thus ended the first memorable siege of Bharatpur.

The British army was no longer in a position to renew hostile operations and therefore on 22 February the ordnance was withdrawn from batteries and troops were taken out from the trenches. Moving to the north-east of Bharatpur Fort three days later, Lord Lake occupied a position from which he commanded the roads to Agra, Mathura and Dig.

The war had put the Maharaja of Bharatpur to enormous expenses and he also wanted to patch up. Therefore when Lord Lake was elevated to the peerage, Ranjit Singh offered him congratulations and professed peace. A treaty was entered into on 18 April 1805. This provided for peace and the payment of an indemnity of rupees 20 lakhs by the Maharaja.

Siege of 1826

The 1826 siege as got from English sources is as follows. In 1825 there was conflict in claim to the State. Balwant Singh, the heir, was favoured by the British against Durjan Sal who had taken control of the State with a force exceeding 20,000 men and 100 pieces of artillery. The British advanced upon Bharatpur under their commander-in-chief General Lord Combermere. On 5 December 1825 he had his headquarters at Mathura. He ordered the second division of infantry, commanded by Major-general Nocolla, with the first brigade of cavalry and a detachment of Skinner's Horse, to march from Agra to Bharatpur to take up a position to the west of the town. The first division of infantry under Major-general Reynell, with the second brigade of cavalry, and the remainder of Skinner's Horse marched by another route to take up position on the north-east of the town. With this column Lord Combermere arrived before Bharatpur on 10 December.

Combermere proposed to Durjan Sal that he withdraw all women and children from the town, promising their safe conduct in his camp. To this proposal the latter gave a non-committal reply. When the talks were on, the Raja of Nimrana who was stationed at the Gundwa or Moti Jheel Bund, cut the embankment so as to fill up the broad deep ditch surrounding the town, as they had done during the siege in 1805. But before he had quite effected his purpose, the English troops slew the Raja and made themselves masters of the embankment, quickly repairing the breach that had been made by them.

Disappointed at this failure in the first attempt, Durjan Sal sent Dewan Jawahir Lal, Faujdar Churaman and Lala Hardeo Bakhsh to Sir Charles Metcalfe to negotiate peace, but since to Metcalfe nothing short of restoration of Maharaja Balwant Singh to the State was acceptable, war became inevitable.

The British constructed earthworks which took a few days. In the meanwhile a party of about 200 of Durjan Sal's cavalry attempted to make their escape but they were intercepted. About forty of them were killed and

more than one hundred taken as prisoners.

On 23 December the besiegers under heavy fire from the garrison completed their first parallel trench in the vicinity of Gopalgarh in the north-eastern part of the city, and next morning two heavy batteries opened fire on the city. Other batteries were brought into action in quick succession, and during the remainder of the month a vast quantity of powder and shot was expended till scarcely a roof remained uninjured. But neither shot nor shell could make any impression on a tough mud wall, the most impenetrable of all possible defences, and which moreover was 50 to 64 feet thick. In the evening of 5 January 1826 a mine was commenced in one portion of the wall on the northern face of the earthworks, but by daybreak it was not sufficiently advanced. The engineers, apprehending discovery, prematurely exploded the mine which produced no material effect. A second attempt to mine was made, but those employed in it were countermined from the interior before they had entered many feet. The galary made was blown up, it having been discovered that the defenders were keeping watch on them.

Some European deserters from the British army went over to Durjan Sal who entrusted them with a gun which they worked so skilfully that on 8 January a shot fired from it blew up 20,000 lb weight of gun powder in the British camp. On the 14th another mine under one of the bastions was exploded precipitately, producing no more effect than great smoke and a terrific noise. But two more mines driven into the same work were fired on the 16th so successfully that with the aid of another day's battering a breach was effected. On the 17th, however, an immense mine was completed and charged with a vast quantity of powder. The following day was fixed for storming the city.

Early in the morning of 18 January 1826 the storming parties established themselves in the advance trenches. The breach on the left which was already practicable for an assault, was to be attacked by the brigade under General Nicolls, headed by 59th Regiment. The breach on the right was to be attacked by General Reynell's brigade, headed by 14th Regiment, the explosion of a mine under the north-east bastion called the Nalwali Burj being the signal for commencement of the attack. This took place at eight o'clock with terrific effect. The explosion was enormous; the whole of the salient angle and portion of the stone cavalier behind it was hurled into the air, which for a time became as dark as night, while the entire garrison that was stationed there was blown to the winds or buried amidst the ruins. The result was an enormous breach. Owing, however, to defective construction of the mine, many of the ejected stones and masses of earth fell upon the heads of the attacking parties, killing a number of men and severely wounding some of the officers. The stones and debris fell so thickly about Lord Combermere himself that Brigadier-General

Maccombe was knocked down by his side and two sepoys were killed within a few feet of him.

The troops however pushed home the attack with great pertinacity, and in excellent order ascended the breaches and cleared them in the teeth of a very determined resistance on the part of Bakhshi Kishan Ram and Faujdar Kishen Ballabh and their followers. On the left, where the ascent was steep and difficult, the grandiers moved up slowly and resolutely without stopping to pull a trigger in return for the volleys of round shot, grape and musketry which were fired upon them. Within two hours the ramparts of the town on the north-east between the Mathura and Kumher gates were in possession of the British who also rushed in from all the breaches effected between these gates. The garrison on the Ansh and Nimda gates made a feeble attempt at resistance, but being overwhelmed by the invaders from the Mathura gate, they soon threw away their muskets and fled. The gates of the citadel surrendered early in the afternoon, and the victorious British force was in undisputed command of both the city and the fort before dusk of the same evening.

Brigadier-General Sleigh who commanded the cavalry, had taken precautions outside to prevent the escape of Durjan Sal, and when that chief, with 160 chosen horse attempted to force his passage through Naswaria Bas to Kumher Gate with a view to escaping to Biana, he was made prisoner by the 8th Light Dragoons, as a result of information given by Balmukand Naswaria. One of his wives, two of his sons (Thakur Khushal Singh and Kalyan Singh) and Siriji Mahant were also captured with him. Jagat Singh, his eldest son, succeeded in reaching Biana but he was also afterwards captured there. They were all brought up before Lord Combermere who sent Durjan Sal with his family as a state prisoner to Allahabad, and confined the Thakurs and the Mahant for some time in the fort at Agra. The entire losses sustained by the British Army during the siege and storming came to 61 Europeans and 42 Indians killed, and 283 Europeans and 183 Indians wounded. The loss of the garrison was estimated at 4,000, nearly all killed by the awful explosion of the great mine.

The whole of the enemy's ordnance numbering 135 pieces was captured by the English—twelve of these were purchased by Jani Baij Nath for the State, and a very heavy gun was sent to Fort William as a souvenir of this important victory.

After the British camp with its ammunition arms and stores had been removed to a place of safety near Adi garden on the Moti Jheel, the principal bastions and other important parts of the fortification were blown up, and it was left to the monsoon rains to complete the ruin of what were once impregnable earthworks.

On 5 February 1826, Lord Combermere, Sir Charles Metcalfe, William Fraser and other British officers proceeded to the palace and during a public Durbar held for the purpose, installed Balwant Singh as Maharaja in succession to his father, under the regency of his mother Amrit Kunwar, and the Diwanship of Jani Baij Nath and superintendence of a British political Agent.

English Forts

FORTS suitable for defence from growing forces and destructive powers of artillery were constructed by the western powers on their penetration in the country. The English built forts at Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, the French at Wandiwash and the Portuguese at Daman. Fort William at Calcutta, Fort St. George at Madras and Fort of Bombay were examples of British forts. 'Clive built Fort William in such a manner that according to the opinion of the English it would be impossible to take it even if the whole of united Hindustan should fight against it.'* Clive commanded the construction of Fort William in 1757 and twenty million rupees were spent on its construction.

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*Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 35, Part 5, p. 10.

36. FORT WILLIAM

'IT has stood no sieges, no gun has ever been fired against an enemy from its ramparts. '*

In 1644 when Gabriel Boughton, the surgeon of the East India Company, cured Princess Jahanara of her burns at Agra, emperor Shahjahan was immensely pleased and asked him to name his reward. Boughton's only request was that a firman be issued granting the English permission to freely trade in Bengal. To this the gratified Emperor acceeded. Surgeon Boughton's good fortune accompanied him to Bengal where he successfully cured another royal lady who was hopelessly ill. Prince Shuja the second son of Emperor Shahjahan and viceroy of Bengal, was grateful and permitted the English in 1651 to establish factories at Hooghly and agencies at Patna and Kasim Bazar for an annual payment of 3000 rupees. In July 1690 Job Charnock established an English factory in a village north of Calcutta. But he had no permission to fortify it and the military establishment of the English consisted of only 100 men.

The English did not face any problem for some time. But in 1695 when some people rebelled against the Nawab, the English solicited permission for self-defence and at the same time erected masonry walls capable of bearing guns round their factory. Built during the years 1696-1707 the fort was named **Fort William after William III.**

Fort William had a garrison of 120 soldiers, including the Europeans. The Government House, the factory, the bureaux, the writer's quarters, the work-shops, godowns all were within the fort. It was only 710 feet long, and 340 to 485 feet wide at the south. Sir Charles Eyre was the first president of Fort William.

In 1713 the Court of Directors criticised the weak defence. This came true when on 20 June 1756 it was surrendered to Siraj-ud-daula, Nawab of Bengal, after a very feeble resistance. At the time of its capture the fort had neither money nor weapons to fight. The total number of soldiers was 275 of whom only 180 were fit, the remaining were either sick or in outlying places. Though provisions were in abundance there was no cook. The Governor slipped away and sheltered himself on board a ship. When Siraj-ud-daula entered the fort, 'the English sat like trapped rats. The Nawab changed the name of Calcutta to Alinagar and appointed Raja Manikchand as the governor of Fort William.

To take Fort William back Clive arrived from Madras and with his men he recaptured Calcutta on 2 January 1757. On 23 June 1757 he defeated Siraj-ud-daula in the Battle of Plassey and placed Mir Zafar on the throne as the

*Cotton, H.E.A., *Calcutta Old and New*, p. 842.

Nawab of Bengal. He selected a site for the new Fort William in the hamlet of Gobindpur, south of its predecessor fort. The whole colony with the deity of Gobindji and a historic shrine received compensation in money and grants of land for their dispossession.

Clive commenced the construction, without obtaining formal permission of the Court of Directors, in October 1757 under the charge of Captain Brohier and he himself supervised its planning. Captain Brohier had long teething troubles for want of labour. Various orders were issued. Persons under the Company's protection were prevented from undertaking any new building and workmen were required to register themselves for public services. It was only by June 1770 that a sizable number of 10,000 workmen came for employment and the fort was finally completed in 1772 at a cost of 20 million sterling. A Dutch admiral who visited Calcutta in 1770 writes that permission was granted to every inhabitant of Calcutta to build a house in the fort. By 1770 one was inclined to avail of this privilege.

No doubt Clive wanted Fort William to be invinsible. According to the English it would be impossible to take it even if the whole of Hindustan should fight against it.

The fort was an irregular octagon; its five sides were towards land and three towards the river. It was surrounded by a dry ditch and had a capacity of mounting 600 guns of various calibre. The works were raised very little above the surrounding place. It could be approached by seven gateways, namely Calcutta gate, Plassey gate, Treasury gate, Hospital gate, St. George gate, Chorangi gate and Water gate.

In 1766 the bastions were known as the King's, Queen's, Prince of Wales's and Duke of Cumberland's and the demi-bastions were distinguished as the Duke of York's and the King of Prussia's. The fort had barracks for Europeans and native troops, arsenal, store rooms, magazines and extensive parade ground. It was capable of housing 10,000 men and had 10-ton guns on battlements.

The granary barracks contained 51,258 maunds of rice and 20,023 maunds of paddy deposited under the order of the Governor-General in Council in 1782. The building was 90½ feet broad, 127 feet long and 24 feet high and built of brick and lime. During the impeachment of Warren Hastings the 15th charge against him was that he appointed his private secretary John Belli Esquire to be agent for the supply of stores and provisions for the garrison of Fort William in Bengal with a commission of 30 per cent. Hastings wrote to a friend in England on 15 October 1783, 'I have begun such a provision in the fort, where we have bottled up 70,000 maunds and I do not intend to uncork it till it has stood twenty years.'* For some time after 1871 this granary was strengthened and was used as a military prison.

The bazar was planned by Sir John Macpherson and the Chief Engineer in 1787. All the shops were registered and the tariff were also fixed.

*Cotton, op. cit., p. 851-2.

Other Forts

AN individual or a group of persons, in fact every social being, craves for security which can be organised and provided for at the state level. What if the states come in conflict whether out of greed, or for power or other reasons which can be numerous ? In the past, fort was one of the sanctuaries that provided protection to the people.

Forts were therefore built by rulers wherever the need of security was felt. And this was necessary everywhere and therefore there came up forts at every place of importance. In every region of India one comes across forts and this work deals with forts from every region except Kerala, Orissa and north-eastern states and union territories. These states have small forts and no major forts are located in their boundaries, which is why they don't figure in this book.

In Assam and neighbouring states, forts, e.g. Gargaon in Assam, were built by Kacharis and Ahoms. The Kachari kings built some forts, one of which was Khaspura. Today only its remnants remain.

In Kerala forts were known as Pettais. Tellichery, Ayakotta, Cannanore, Padmanabhapuram had small forts. These were small and played small roles. Likewise Orissa too had no major fort and today hardly any remnants of the forts are visible. Barawati walls give only glimpses of the size and shape of the fort. Chatia, another place, had a fort. Nowgong and Bhalukpong in Assam had forts, though small. Boda in Jalpaigiri had a one-mile-square fort. Shyamnagar, near Barrackpore, too had a fort. Punjab could claim forts at Nabha, Ropar, Sirhind, Faridkot, etc. Mercara in Karnataka, Monghyr in Bihar, Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh, Narwar and Chanderi in Madhya Pradesh, Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, Chakan, Junar, Kulang Along, Pratap Garh, Andheri-Khanderi, Pandavgarh, Vijaydurg, Arcot, Kondapalli, Krishna Giri, Masulipatam, Tanjore, Vellore, Trichy and Dindigul were important forts. Aligarh, Jhansi, Kalpi, Kasipur in Uttar Pradesh had forts. The Bundellas maintained their independence against the armies of Mughuls and Marathas. Tarapur in Ajmer was a fascinating fort.

Glossary

Ambarikhana	granary, a magazine of grain
Bala Hissar	high fort
Baradari	summer house with several indoors (entrances)
Burj	tower, dove-cote, slender turret, pinnacle
Chhatri	umbrella
Chunam	lime
Diwan-i-Am	Hall of Public Audience
Diwan-i-Khas	Private Audience chamber
Darshan	appearance
Darwaza	gate
Duli	swing cot
Dwapar Yug	the third age of the world
Faujdar	an officer of the Mughul government who was invested with the charge of the police, and jurisdiction in criminal matters
Feringi	foreigner
Firman	mandate, order, a command under the royal signature
Gagan	sky
Gargach	moving platform
Gharana	family
Hathipol	Elephant gate
Havildar	native officer
Jai	victory
Johar	ancient custom among Rajputs according to which their ladies, in order to save their honour from conquering enemies, hurled themselves onto a burning pyre
Khandi	a measure of weight. Its value varies in different places; at Bombay it consists of 20 maunds

Kiledar	commandant of a fort
Kos	measure of distance varying in different parts of India from one to two miles
Kund	pond, tank
Lalkot	red castle
Magh	the month between January and February
Mahal	palace
Mandap	open building, pavilion or temple; temporary structure for various festival occasions
Mandir	temple
Manjanik	a catapult or medieval machine for shooting stone missiles
Mansabdar	noble holding a military rank
Masjid	mosque
Minar	tower
Nach-Ghar	dancing house
Nagar	city
Nazim	governor, viceroy, superior officer charged with administration
Niwas	residence
Nowrattra	nine days
Pandava brothers	five warrior sons of King Pandu of Hastinapur of ancient times. They battled against their cousins Kaurawas in the famous Mahabharata
Parbat	mountain
Paur	gate
Pol	gate
Prabhu	master, lord, leader
Purandar	Aryan war god, generally used for Indra the conqueror of forts
Pur-charishnu	moving fort
Rai Pithora	King Prithviraj
Raja	king
Rani	queen
Sabat	an earthern mound raised to the top of a besieged fort

Sangam	confluence of two or more rivers
Sanyasi	hermit
Sarkar	the government, king; it also signifies an extensive division under Mohammedan government
Sati	Hindu widow who immolates herself on her husband's funeral pyre
Shish Mahal	mirror palace
Subhah	province
Stambha	tower, pillar
Takhat Padshahi	royal throne
Vana	forest, groove
Zenana Mahal	ladies palace

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Index

Aazz-ud-din Khalid Khani, 19
Abaji Sondev, 91
Abbas Khan, 17
Abdali, Ahmad Shah, 11, 80, 83
Abdul Razzak, 52
Abdullah Pani, 55-56
Abdullah Shah, 56
Abhai Singh, 34
Aborigines, 2
Abud, Saikh, 92
Abul Fazal, 43
Abul Hasan Tana Shah, 56, 57
Abul Qasim Khan, 80
Achyuta, 52
Adham Khan's tomb, 7
Adi Garden (Bharatpur), 106
Adil Khan, Ismail, 54
Adil Shah, Ali, 54, 57, 62, 63
Adil Shah I, Ibrahim, 60, 62, 63
Adil Shah II, Ibrahim, 62
Adil Shah, Ismail, 60
Adil Shah, Mohammad, 60, 72
Adil Shah, Yusuf, 62, 63
Adilabad, 8
Adilshahi dynasty (Kings), 62, 91, 93; territory, 60
Afganistan, 84
Afghans, 18, 40, 69, 72, 78, 80, 82
Afzal Khan, 63, 93
Agni Purana, 3
Agra, 9, 10, 30, 79, 82, 104, 106, 109
Agra Fort (Lal Qila), 34, 81; buildings, 84; gates, 82; Mahals, 83
Ahasanabad, 54
Ahichhatra, 2
Ahmad (engineer, Red Fort, Delhi), 10
Ahmad Shah, 31, 41, 43, 54
Ahmad Shah I, 67
Ahmadnagar 45, 46, 48, 53, 55, 56, 62, 88, 89, 91
Ahmed, Malik, 88
Ahmedabad, 4, 32, 41, 42, 44
Ahoms, 11
Ahuka, 3
Aibak, Qutb-ud-din, 7, 12, 15, 16, 17
Ain-e-Mulk, 67
Ain-i-Akbari, 70
Aina Mahal (Rohtasgarh), 69
Ajai Deo, 17
Ajanta, 99
Ajatshatru, 3
Ajit Singh, Maharaja, 32
Ajmer, 27, 111
Akbar, 9, 13, 15, 18, 19, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 36, 43, 55, 58, 68, 69, 72, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84
Akbar II, 10, 11
Akbar Mahal (Agra Fort), 83
Akbari door, 34
Al Hassini, Mukhtiar Khan, 61
Al Mamun, 28
Alai Fort (Koshak-in-Siri), 7
Alam Darwaza (Kalinjar), 15
Alamgiri gate (Gwalior Fort), 14
Alexander, 3, 15
Ali Bahadur, 18
Ali Mardan, 11
Ali Muhammad Khan, 39
Ali Quli Khan, 78
Ali Shah Mohammad, 64
Alivardi Khan, 10
Aligarh, 111
Alinagar, 109
Alipur gate (Bijapur), 63
Allahabad, 72, 83, 106
Alwar fort, 22
Amar Singh, 30, 68, 70
Amar Singh gate (Agra Fort), 82
Amaranayakas, 52
Ambarkhana, 93
Ambarikhanera, 35

Amber, 22, 26
Amber Fort : entrances, 35
Amber, Malik, 60, 62
Ambikeshwar Mahadev, 35
Ambrish, 35
Amir, 60, 81
Amir Barid, 60, 62
Amri, 1
Amri Khan, 32
Amrit Kunwar, 106
Anagundi, 52; Raja of, 51
Anand Pal, 16
Anangpal, Tomar King, 7
Anchar lake, 79
Andheri-Khanderi, 111
Andhra Kingdom, 40
Andhra Pradesh, 111
Anguri Bagh (Agra Fort), 84
Ansh (Bharatpur), 106
Antapal, 4
Anup Mahal (Bikaner Fort), 34
Aqasi, Abdullah Khan Ishk, 80
Arail, 78
Aravalli Hills, 30
Archaeological Survey of India, 7
Arcot, 99, 111; Nawab of, 98
Aretpol gate (Kumbhalgarh Fort), 30
Ark Qila (Bijapur), 63
Arnal, Hazuar Ud-din Hasan, 16
Arthashastra, 3
Aryans, 2
Asaf Jah, 60
Asaf Khan, 72
Asaf-ud-daula, 79
Asaval, 43
Ashmak, 57
Ashoka's pillar, 9
Asht Dhatu, 103
Asian Games at Siri, 7
Askaran, 32
Assam, 111
Attock, 19
Audaka (water) forts, 4
Aurangabad, 47
Aurangzeb, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 30, 32, 36, 44, 54, 55, 60, 63, 70, 78, 82, 83, 84, 86, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97
Ayakotta, 111
Ayodhya, 2, 35
Azad, Abul Kalam, 59
Azad Khan, 62
Azam, Prince, 30

Babur, 13, 14, 15, 17, 24, 26, 29, 82
Bachi (Hari Prabat gate), 79
Badal, 28fn
Badal Singh, 14
Badalgarh gate (Gwalior Fort), 14, 81, 82
Bagar Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Baghdad, 28, 57
Bagherwal Mahajan, 27
Baghullah Khan, 78
Bahadur Shah, 11, 29, 40, 51
Bahal (East Khandesh), 4
Bahman Shah, Ala-ud-din Hasan, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 59
Bahmani, Ahmad Shah, 45, 51
Bahmani, Malik Hussain, 42
Bahmani, Sultan Muhammed Shah, 55
Bahmani II, Alauddin Shah, 91
Bahmani I, Mohammed, 54
Bahmani II, Mohammed Shah, 60, 61
Bahmani III, Mohammed Shah, 45, 67
Bahmani gate (Golkunda), 56
Bahmani tombs, 54
Bahmanis (Dynasty) (Kings), 45, 48, 51, 59, 60, 83, 93
Baij Nath, Jani, 106
Baji, 86
Bajirao I, Peshwa, 98
Bajirao II, 59
Bala Hisar (a high fort), 3
Balaji, 44
'Balakand', 2
Balban (Ulugh Khan), 25
Baluchistan, 1
Balwant Singh, Raja, 72, 103, 104, 106
Banda, 18
Bangarh, Mohammed Khan, 78
Bangla-i-Darshan (Agra Fort), 84
Bangalore, 59
Banjara gate (Golkunda), 56
Banmata temple, 31
Barahdari (Hall of audience, Rohtasgarh), 69, 70
Barawati walls, 111
Baroda, 39, 40, 41
Baroda gate (Dhabhoi fort), 39

Barrackpore, 111
Batuta, Ibn, 8, 13, 49
Baz Bahadur (or Bayzid), 67, 68
Beg, Tarqi, 82
Begarha, Mahmud, 41, 42
Belakot, 2
Bellary, 51
Belli, John Esquire, 110
Benam, 72
Bengal, 69, 70, 77, 83, 98, 109, 110
Bengali Mahal (Agra Fort), 83
Berar, 45, 48, 60
Bhadra, 43, 44; fortress, 43
Bhagwan Das, Raja, 29
Bhainswali Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Bhainsoragarh, 22
Bhairavpol gate (Kumbhalgarh), 30
Bhairon or Bansor Paur gate (Gwalior Fort), 14
Bhalukpong, 111
Bharatpur, Maharaja of, 83, 104
Bharatpur Fort : bastions, 103; gates, 106; palaces, 103; siege of (1805), 103-104; siege of (1826), 104-106
Bharmall, 36
Bharoch, 39
Bhartrinath, 71, 72
Bhati, Rajiya, 31
Bhawani Bai, 59
Bheem Singh, 30
Bhillana, 47
Bhingar, 58
Bhita, 2
Bhoj, Raja, 12, 14
Bhojdev, 23
Bhojraj, 29
Bhonsale, Maloji, 87
Biana, 106
Bidai Chand, 19
Bidar, 45, 46, 48, 53, 54, 56, 62
Bidar Fort : buildings, 61; gates, 61
Bidarshahi Sultans, 60
Bihar, 69, 111
Bijapur, 45, 46, 54, 55, 56, 60, 89, 91, 93, 99
Bijapur Fort : buildings, 63; gates, 63; guns, 62
Bika, Rao, 33
Bikaner, 22, 24, 32
Bikaner Fort : architectural specialities, 34; buildings, 34; gates, 33
Bikramajit, 19
Bilahapur, 40
Bimbisar, 3
Birbal, 18, 19
Biyana, 82
Boda, 111
Bombay, 40, 103, 108
Bonaparte, Napoleon, 97
Bose, Subhas Chandra, 11
Boughton, Gabriel, 109
Brahmins, 36
British (Government; empire), 18, 20, 24, 30 44, 46, 59, 77, 81, 83, 84, 87, 93, 98, 104; British army (troops), 13, 40, 44, 104, 105, 106; British forts, 108
Brohier, Captain, 110
Brown, Percy, 35, 82
Bruce, Captain, 13
Buddhist : stupas, 27; texts, 3
Budhabhadra gate (Kalingar), 15
Bukka, 51
Bundel Khand, 15
Bundellas, 111
Bundi, 22, 26, 35
Burhan, 62
Bussy, M., 99
Buxar, 70, 78

Cairo, 57, 97
Calcutta, 83, 108, 109, 110
Calcutta gate (Fort William), 110
Cannanore, 111
Chait Singh, Raja, 72
Chakan, 91, 111
Chakkili Durg (Gingee), 99
Chalukyas, 47, 61; empire, 59
Champa, 3
Champanir gate (Dabhoi fort), 39
Chand Bardai, 36
Chand Bibi, 58, 62
Chand Minar (Daulatabad), 49
Chand Pol (Amber Fort), 35
Chandella (Kings), 15, 16, 17
Chanderi, 111
Chandi gate (Kalinjar), 15
Chandni Chowk, 10
Chandod or Nanded Gate (Dhabhoi fort), 39, 40
Chandpol gate (Jodhpur Fort), 32

Chandra Mahal (Bikaner Fort), 34
Chandradurg, 99
Chandragiri, 53
Charan-adri, 71
Charnock, Job, 109
Charsada, 3
Chatia, 111
Chaubara (Bikaner Fort), 34
Chauganpol gate (Kumbhalgarh), 30
Chauhan, Joja, 26
Chauhan, Prithvi Raj, 7, 15, 25, 36
Chauhans, 26, 41, 81
Chaukiloo well (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Cheros, 68
Chhatar Mahal (Bikaner Fort), 34
Chhatrasal, 15, 18
Chhatri Nizampur, 90
Chhatris, 9
Chhatta Chowk (Delhi, near Red Fort), 10
Chini Burj (Bikaner Fort), 34
Chitor, 67
Chitor fort : buildings, 27; gates, 27
Chitori hill, 27
Chitranga, 28
Choburga (Bharatpur), 103
Chola Kings, 100
Chorangi Gate (Fort William), 110
Chowra dynasty, 41
Chrotriya, 33
Chunar, 69; buildings, 72-73
Churaman, Faujdar, 104
Clive, 108, 109, 110
Combermere, Lord, 104, 105, 106
Cornwallis, Lord, 98
Curzon, Lord, 73

Dabar Kot, 1
Dabhoi : gates, 39; temples, 40
Dad Mahal (Court of Justice, Golkunda), 56
Dainghia, Trimbakji, 73
Dal Lake, 79
Dala-il-i-Firuz Shahi, 19
Daman, 108
Dambholt, 52
Danial, Prince, 58
Dara Shukoh, 78, 82, 83
Daryab Singh, 18
Daulatabad, 19, 45-46, 53, 54, 60
Day, Francis, 53
Deccan, 18, 40, 48, 54, 56, 60, 77
Delamotte, General, 93
Delhi gate : (Agra Fort), 82; (Red Fort, Delhi), 10
Delhi, 16, 19, 25, 26, 28, 28fn, 29, 40, 48, 50, 56, 57, 63, 67, 82, 87; forts of, 7-11; Muslim rulers of, 7; Sultan of, 23, 25, 45, 53
Deoraj, 24
Devagiri (Daulatabad), 47, 48, 50, 57, 59, 87; *see* also Daulatabad
Devala Devi, 26, 48
Devapala of Kumbalgarh, 28 fn
Devaraya I, 51
Devaraya II, 51, 52
Dhannadurga forts, 38
Dhanvan (desert forts), 4
Dhar, 67, 68
Dhava forts, 3
Dhenkutis, 25
Dhonkhan Singh, 32
Dhundhar, 35
Diamond (Heera) gate (Dabhoi fort), 39, 40
Dilawar Khan, 67
Dindigul, 98, 111
Dinpanah, 9
Divodasa, 2
Diwan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience) : (Agra Fort), 84; (Amber fort) 35; (Bidar Fort) 61; (Rohtasgarh fort), 70
Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audjence): (Agra Fort), 84; (Amber Fort), 35; (Red Fort, Delhi), 10-11
Doab, 17
Doodoo, 24
Dubhoway *see* Dabhoi
Duke of Cumberland (Fort William), 110
Duke of Yorks (Fort William), 110
Dulha Rai, 35
Dungar Singh, Raja, 14
Durbhavati *see* Dabhoi
Durgadas, 32
Durjan Sal, 104, 105, 106
Durrani, Ahmed Shah, 19
Dutch, 94
Dwarka, 3

East India Company, 24, 36, 70, 72, 79, 97, 109, 110

Eesul, 23
Eiaz Sultan, Malik, 42
Elikad Khan, 91
Ellora, 99
Elphinston, 34
England (*see* also Britain), 97, 110; English soldiers, 44, 72, 79, 109
Europeans, 79, 106, 110 ; Europen Invalid Batallion, 72
Eyre, Sir Charles, 109

Faridkot, 111
Farrukhsiyar, 11
Fateh gate (Golkunda), 56
Fateh Mahal (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Fateh Singh, 40
Fatehpol entrance (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Fatehpur Sikri, 34
Feringi Burj (Bijapur Fort), 63
Ferista, 15, 16, 41, 47, 68
Feroze Shah Kotla (palace fort of Firuzabad), 8-9
Finch, William, 77
Fort of Bombay, 108
Fort St. George, Madras, 53, 108
Fort William, 106, 108, 109, 110
Forts, classification of, 3, 4
Fraser, William, 106

Gagan Mahal : (Bidar Fort), 61; (Bijapur), 64
Gaikwad, 40
Gaikwar, Fateh Singh, 44
Gaj Mandir (Bikaner Fort), 34
Gaj Singh, 24
Gandhara, 3
Ganesh gate (Kalinjar), 15
Ganesh Paur gate (Gwalior Fort), 14
Ganesh Pol : (Amber Fort), 35; (Kumbhalgarh Fort), 30
Ganesh temple : (Gwalior Fort), 15; (Rohtasgarh), 70
Ganga, 3, 71, 77, 93
Ganga Niwas (Bikanar Fort), 34
Ganganagar, 1
Ganj Shahid, 44
Garah river, 24
Gargach, 26
Gaur, Sultan of, 23
Gawan, Khwaja Mahmood, 61, 62
Ghaggar, 1
Ghalib (Victorious) mosque (Bijapur), 63
Ghatta, 52
Ghazi Jalal, 40
Ghazni Khan (gun, Jodhpur Fort), 32
Ghazni, Mahmud, 12, 15-16, 18
Ghiyas-ud-din, 8, 48, 67
Ghoda ghat (Rohtasgarh), 70
Gingee Fort : guns, 99; temples, 99
Giri forts, 3
Girnar, 41
Gobindji, deity of, 110
Goddard, Col., 40, 44
Goga gate (Bikaner Fort), 33
Gogund, 22
Gohad, 13
Gokal Ramu Risaldar Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Gole Gumbaz (Bijapur), 63
Golkunda, 45, 46, 51, 57, 62, 63, 99; Burjs, 56; gates, 56; Mahals, 56, 57
Gopachala, Gopadri, Gopagiri, 12; *see* also Gwalior
Gopalgarh, 105
Gora, 28fn
Gorakhnath, 71
Gosain, 39
Gosain, Rajendra Giri, 78
Goshal Mahal (Golkunda), 57
Govinda, 24
Great Wall of China, 1
Guhilot, 28
Gujari Palace (Gwalior Fort), 14
Gujarat, 28, 29, 31, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 67, 83
Gulab Sagar (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Gulab Singh, 80, 81
Gulbarga, 45, 46, 48, 51, 55, 57, 59, 60, 62
Gulchand, Raja, 53
Gulf of Cambay, 1
Gulab Singh, 81
Gumbad Darwaja (Bidar Fort), 61
Gundwa or Moti Jheel Bund, 104
Gupta empire (rulers), 4, 12
Gurbaksh Singh, 19
Gurgaon(near Delhi), 7

Gargaon (in Assam), 111
Gurkhas, 20
Gwalip, 12
Gwalior fort, 12-15, 35, 82; gates, 14; palaces, 14; tanks, 15; temples, 14-15
Gwaliwara, 12; *see* also Gwalior

Hada, 26, 27
Hamams, 72
Hamdani, 83
Hamid (engineer, Red Fort, Delhi), 10
Hamir Deo, 25, 26, 29
Hammam (Red Fort, Delhi), 11
Hamman Shahi (Agra Fort), 84
Hanging Roof garden (Golkunda), 56
Hanuman gate : (Kalinjar) 15; (Kumbhalgarh fort), 30
Harappa, 1
Hardeo Bakash, Lala, 104
Hardeo Singh, 18
Hari Mandir (Bikaner Fort), 34
Hari Parbat gates, 79
Harihar II, 51
Harish Chandra (Rohtasgarh), 68, 70
Hariyupiyu, 2
Harpal Deva, 48
Harris, General, 98
Harsha, 4
Hasan Ali Khan, 30
Hasan Nizami, 16
Hasta gate (Jodhpur fort), 32
Hastings, Warren, 72, 73, 110
Hathi Darwaza (Rohtasgarh), 69
Hauz-i-Jahangiri (Agra Fort), 84
Hieun Tsang, 4, 79
Hilderbrandt, 2
Himachal Pradesh, 111
Himmat Ali, 77
Hindola Mahal (Mandu), 68
Hindola Paur gate (Gwalior Fort), 14
Hindus, 16, 44; Kingdoms, 45; Styles, 9
Hira Manzil (Red Fort, Delhi), 11
Holkar, Tukoji, 40
Holkar; Yashwantrao, 90, 92
Hoshang Shah (Mandu), 67, 68
Hospital gate (Fort William), 110
Hoysalas, 47.
Hulla pol gate (Kumbhalgarh fort), 30
Humayun, 9, 15, 17, 42, 67, 69, 71; his tomb, 9
Huna, 15
Hussain Khan, Ghulam, 78
Hyder Ali, 99
Hyderabad, 49, 55, 98

INA (Indian National Army), 11
Iftikar Khan, 72
Iltutmish, 12, 15, 17, 25
Imammundin, Sheikh, 80, 81
Imdad Shah, Sultan Alauddin, 60
Indergarh, 22
Indrapat, 2
Indraprastha, 7, 9
Indus Valley Civilisation, 1
Islam, 16, 42
Ishwari Singh, 36
Itwar (Agra Fort), 83
Iyengar, Tirumalai, 98
Izzat Khan, 10

Jagat Singh, 36, 106
Jagdishpur, 68
Jahan Khan, 83
Jahanara, Princess, 83, 109
Jahangir, 9, 19, 30, 33, 36, 44, 68, 70, 72, 73, 77, 82, 83, 84
Jahangir Khan, 57
Jahangiri Mahal (Agra Fort), 83
Jahanpanah (the World Refuge), 8
Jahaz Mahal (Mandu), 68
Jai Mal, 29
Jai Singh, Raja of Champanir, 41, 42
Jai Singh Kanheya, 19
Jaisingh, Mirza Raja, 35
Jai Singh, Sawai, 35, 36
Jai Stambha (Pillar of Victory, Chitor fort), 29
Jain Mandir (Gwalior fort), 15
Jaitsi, Rao, 33
Jaipal, Raja of Lahore, 16
Jaipal, Amir of Agra, 81
Jaipol gate (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Jaipur, 32, 34, 35, 36
Jaipur, fort, 22
Jaisal, Rawal, 23
Jaisalmer, 22
Jalaluddin, Sultan, 25, 47
Jalar gate (Jodhpur fort), 32
Jalpaigiri, 111
Jamal gate (Golkunda), 56

Jama Masjid : (Bijapur), 64; (Mandu), 68; (Rohtasgarh), 69
Jami or Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque, 7
Jami Masjid, Ahmedabad, 42 44
Jamuna, 2, 9, 11, 77, 78, 82, 83, 93
Jassusar gate (Bikaner Fort), 33
Jasvant Singh, Dharmat Raja, 32, 83
Jaugada (Orissa), 4
Jaunpur, 71
Jawahir Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Jawahir Lal, Dewan, 104
Jawalamukhi, 18, 19
Jayant, Maharaja, 24
Jericho, 1
Jesul, 23
Jetsi (King), 23
Jhansi, 13, 111
Jharok-i-Shahi, 80
Jhunjuwada, 39
Jhusi, 2
Jijabai, 89, 93
Jodha Singh, Rao, 31
Jodhpur city, 22, 31, 33, 34, 83
Jodhpur fort : gates, 32; buildings, 32; lakes, 32; towers, 32; entrances, 32
Johar 15, 26, 28, 28fn, 29, 42
Jorwa, 4
Jullundar Doab, 20
Junnar, 87, 111
Jupila of Khayarava Lavanga, 69

Kabul, 80
Kacharis, 111
Kachhwaha(s), 12; kingdom, 35; princes, 35; rulers, 36; style, 14
Kadri Shah, 67
Kafar, Malik, 62
Kailwa, 29
Kaimur Hills, 68
Kakatiya(s), 49, 59
Kakil Deo, 35
Kali gate, (Hari Parbat), 79
Kali Mata Temple (Ahmedabad), 43
Kalibagan, 1
Kalika Devi, 42; temple (Dabhoi), 40
Kalimullah Shah, 45
Kalinjar (or Kalam-Jar), 15-18; entrances, 15; gates, 15
Kalka Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Kalka Mata Temple (Chitor fort), 27
Kalpi, 111
Kalyan Mahal (Gingee), 99
Kalyan Singh, 106
Kalyanmal, 33
Kamalpur, 52
Kamran, 33
Kamru, 25
Kangra, 18, 19, 20
Kanhaiya, Naik Raja, 50, 51, 55
Kannauj, 4, 12, 14
Karachi forts, 2
Karam Chand, 33
Karan or Kirti Mandir (Gwalior Fort), 14
Karnataka, 51, 61, 111
Karnavati, Rani, 29
Kashmir, 79, 80
Kasim Bazar, 109
Kasim-ud-din, Malik, 62
Kasipur, 111
Kathauliya (Rohtasgarh), 69; Darwaza 70; ghat, 70
Kathiawad, 1
Katoch Raja, 19
Kausambi, 2, 3
Kautilya, 4
Kazi Ahmad, 43
Kedar Raja, 15
Kesaria, 28
Khaibri, Gul Khan, 80
Khairuddin, 71
Khalji dynasty (Khaljis), 25, 29, 50, 62, 67, 82
Khalji, Ala-ud-din, 7, 25, 26, 28, 28fn, 40, 45, 47, 48, 50, 57, 67
Khalji, Mahmud, 30, 31, 41, 67, 68, 71
Khalji, Qutbuddin Mubarak, 13
Khan Douran Khan Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Khan-i-Azam, 51
Khandoji, 91
Kharwas, 68, 69
Khas Mahal, Shah Jahani Mahal (Agra Fort), 84
Khemkaran, 103
Khizr Khan 28, 29, 48
Khizrabad, 28
Khonddev, Dadaji, 87
Khumbha, Maharana, 31
Khurram, Prince (later Shahjahan), 68, 70; *see* also Shahjahan

Khushal Singh, Thakur, 106
Khwaja Banda Nawaz, 54
Khyats, 33
Kiledar Mahadev, Potnis, 92
Kilkila gun (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Kirat Singh, Raja, 17
Kirti Mandir (Gwalior Fort), 14
Kirti Stambha or Tower of Fame (Chitor Fort), 27
Kishan Ram, Bakshi, 106
Kishan Singh, Rawat, 33
Kishen Ballabh, Faujdar, 106
Koh-i-maran, 81
Kolaka forts, 38
Kolhapur, 59, 93
Kondana, 88, 89
Kondapalli, 111
Koshak-in-Siri or Alai Fort, 7
Kot Digi, 2
Kot gate (Bikaner Fort), 33, 34
Kotla, Feroze Shah, 7
Krishnadevaraya, 52, 54
Krishnagir, 99, 111
Kuar Singh, 68
Kulang Along, 111
Kumbha, Maharana, 27, 29, 30, 31, 67
Kumbhalgarh Fort, 22, 29, 30
Kumbhalmer, 31
Kumher (Bharatpur), 106
Kundhra, 53
Kurnool, 111
Kutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah, 57
Kutlugh Khan, 17

Lad Malik, 71
Lahore, 10; Raja of, 16; Durbar, 20
Lahori Gate (Red Fort, Delhi), 10
Lake, Lord, 83, 103, 104
Lakhota gate, 29
Lakpat Rai Wazir, 80
Lakshman Paur or Hathi Paur gate (Gwalior Fort), 14
Lakshman Singh, 29
Lakshmimani, 98
Lal Darwaza :(Rohtasgarh), 69, 70; (Kalinjar),15
Lal Kot, 7
Lal Qila (Red Fort, Delhi), *see* Red Fort
Land Qassab (Bijapur Fort), 63
Lanepool, Stanley, 48
Lodi, Ibrahim, 13, 14, 82
Lodi, Sikandar, 14, 71, 82
Lodis, 13
Lodorpoora, Lodorva, 23
Lokendra Singh, 13
Lokhota Bari gate (Chitor Fort), 27
Lothal, 1

Maccombe, Brigadier-General, 105-106
Machchhi Bhavan (Fish Palace) (Agra Fort), 84
Machindrapur, 30
Macpherson, Sir John, 110
Madana Temple, (Golkunda), 57
Madavachariya, 51
Madhya Pradesh, 68, 111
Madras, 53, 97, 98, 99, 108, 109
Magadh, 3
Mahaba, 16
Mahabalipuram, 15, 99
Mahabharata, 3, 15, 59
Mahagiri, 15
Mahal Serai (Rohtasgarh), 69, 70
Mahalak Dev, Rai, 67
Maharashtra, 47, 57, 76, 86, 93
Maharawal Mulraj, 24
Maharawal's palace (Jaisalmer fort), 23
Maheshwara, 4
Mahi forts, 3
Mahipal, Raja of Delhi, 19
Mahipala, 14
Mahmud II, 67
Mahmud Khalji (Mandu), 68
Mahmud Shah, 42, 81, 82
Mahmud, Sultan, 55
Majnu Khan, 18
Makka gate (Golkunda), 56
Makrana, 1, 2
Maldeo Sonagra, 29, 32, 33
Malik Ahmad, 43
Malik-i-Mardan (Bijapur Fort), 63
Malik Kafur, 47, 50
Malik Naib, 48, 50, 54
Mallu Khan, 67
Malwa, 25, 26, 29, 41, 67, 68, 82; Sultan of, 25

Man Palace (Gwalior Fort), 14
Man Singh, Raja, 13, 14, 26, 27, 28, 32, 35
Mandalgarh, 22
Mandhata, 35
Mandi, 111
Mandu : 'tower of victory', 67; buildings, 68; palaces, 68
Manek Burj (Ahmedabad), 43, 44; Kuwa, 44
Mangal (Agra Fort), 83
Manikchand, Raja, 109
Manjaniks, 25
Mansabdar, 36
Man Singh, 69
Manushya forts, 3
Marathas, 13, 18, 24, 31, 36, 44, 46, 63, 68, 83, 89, 90, 92, 93, 98
Marijan, Malik, 60
Markamat Khan, 10
Martindel, Col., 18
Marwar, 22, 24, 30, 32
Masud bin Sad bin Salman, Khwaja, 81
Masulipatam, 111
Mathura, 2, 104
Mathura gate (Bharatpur), 106
Matricheta, 15
Maurya, Chandragupta, 3
Mawalis, 89
Mecca gate (Bijapur), 63
Meena Bazar, (Agra Fort), 84
Mendhra ghat (Rohtasgarh), 70
Merar, 13
Mercara, 111
Metcalfe, Sir Charles, 104, 106
Mewar, 26, 29, 30; Maharanas of, 31
Mihirakula, 12, 15
Minas, 35
Mir Kasim Nawab, 68, 70
Mir Zafar, 109
Miran Khan, 80
Mirza Khan, 58
Mirza Khankhana, 58
Miran Shah, Sultan, 58
Mirzapur, 72
Mocha, 97
Mohammed Gauri, 16
Mohmmed Khan, 67
Mohammed Shah, 51, 62, 67
Mohammed Shah, Qamizi, 25
Mohammed Sultan, 78
Mohammadans, 53, 61, 88; *see* also Muslims
Mohenjodaro, 1, 2
Mohiuddin, 80
Momin Khan, 44
Monghyr, 111
Mongols, 26, 48
Motamid Khan, 14
Moti gate (Golkunda), 56
Moti Jheel (Bharatpur), 106
Moti Mahal (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Moti Masjid : (Agra Fort), 84; (Red Fort, Delhi), 11
Mrignaina, Rani, 12, 19
Mru forts, 3
Mubarak, Qutbuddin Shah, 48
Mughuls,7, 9, 10, 11, 13,17, 18, 19, 24, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40 42, 46, 48, 55, 58, 60, 67,69, 71, 72, 82, 87, 89, 90, 91, 99, 111
Muhammad Shah, 41
Muhammadabad, 40, 42
Mula Khan, Mehtar, 82
Munna Jan, Nawab, 73
Munro, Major, 72
Muquim Kanth, 80
Murad Bakhash, 83
Murad, Prince, 44, 58
Musa Burj (Golkunda)), 55, 56
Musamman Burj Khwabgah (Red Fort, Delhi), 11
Muscat, 97
Muslim rule (Rulers), 7, 28, 40, 67; harmonies, 9; style, 9
Mustafabad (Bijapur fort), 63
Muthamman Burj (Agra Fort), 84
Muzaffar Shah, 43
Mysore, 98

Nabha, 111
Nadir Shah, 10, 11
Nagamangala, 97
Nagar-Nagar, 79, 80
Nagarkot, 19; Raja of, 19
Nagaur Siwana gate (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Nagin Masjid (Agra Fort), 84
Nagmati, Rani of Chitor, 28fn
Nainsi Saiya Bankalia, 29, 42

Naira or Nera, 33
Nalwali Burj, 105
Nana Phadnavis, 59, 92
Napoleon, 98
Naqqar Khana (Bidar Fort), 61
Narbada, 4, 39, 68
Narwar, 111
Nasik, 4
Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, 17, 67
Nassaraja, Kanthirana, 97
Naswaria, Balmukand, 106
Naswaria Bas, 106
Nathusar gate (Bikaner Fort), 33
Naubat Khana (Agra Fort), 84
Navda Toli, 4
Nawal Singh Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Nawali gate (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Nawaspura, 62
Nazaf Khan, 78
Neebupol gate (Kumbhalgarh), 30
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 59
New Fort gate (Golkunda), 56
Nicolls, General, 105
Nigma forts, 38
Nimach, Thakur of, 32
Nimda gates (Bharatpur), 106
Nimrana, Raja of, 104
Nizam, Burhan, 62
Nizam, Sheikh, 91
Nizam Shah, Ahmed, 57
Nizam Shah, Husain, 58
Nizam Shah II, Bahadur, 87
Nizam-ul-Mulk, 60, 63
Nizammudin Ahmed, 16
Nizamshahi dynasty : kingdom 54; rulers, 48, 57, 91
Nocolla, Major-general, 104
Nowgong, 111
Nowrattra, 42
Nurjahan, 68, 84
Nusrat Khan, 25, 53, 54, 59

Ogilby, 43
Oraons, 68
Orissa, 111
Ovens, Colonel, 93

Padmanabhapuram, 111
Padmapurana, 15
Padmini, Queen of Chitor, 28, 28fn
Paggot, Stuart, 47
Pakhadapol gate (Kumbhalgarh), 30
Pakistan, 3
Palamau, 68
Panch Mahal (Gujarat), 40
Pandavas, 7, 27
Pandavgarh, 111
Pandrathan, 79
Panhala, 91
Panipat, battle of, 13, 82
Pankjadurga forts, 38
Panna, 18
Panna Darwaza (Kalinjar), 15
Pant, G. B., 59
Pant, Ramachandra, 93
Pant Sachiv, 90
Parighadurga forts, 38
Pariharas, 12
Parvata forts, 4
Pataliputra fortress, 3
Patancheroo gate (Golkunda), 56
Pathans, 71
Patiala well (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Patna, 3, 39, 40, 78, 109
Patta Singh, 29
Pawan-garh or Pavagarh, 41
Pejavan, 35
Peshawar, 16
Peshwa, Bajirao, 90, 92
Peshwa, Balaji, 90
Peshwa, Narayan Rao, 92
Petta (Golkunda), 56
Pettais, 110
Phul Mahal (Bikaner Fort), 34
Phulwari rock, 69
Pingala, 15
Pir Muhammed, 19
Plassey, battle of, 109
Plassey gate (Fort William), 110
Poona gate (Sinhgarh Fort), 88
Popham, Major, 13, 72
Portuguese, 43, 91
Potnis, Yeshwant Mahadev, 92
Pratap, Maharana, 30
Pratap Garh, 111
Pratap Narain, 78
Pratapadhavala, 69
Prataparudradeva, 50

Pravarasen II, 79
Prayag, 77
Prema Mati, 56
Pritzfer, General, 90
Prod Raja, 49
Prussia, 110
Pune, 57, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92
Pundranagar (Bangladesh), 4
Punjab, 2, 19, 111
Pur charishnu (moving fort), 2
Purana Qila, Delhi, 7, 9
Purandar, 86

Qadir, Rohilla Ghulam, 11
Qasim Barba, 78
Qasim Khan, Muhammad, 82, 83
Qasr-i-Hazar, 8
Qila-i-Khona Mosque, 9
Quit India Movement, 59
Quli Khan, Husain, 19
Quli Khan, Mohammad, 78, 80
Quli, Sultan, 55, 56
Qutb, Ibrahim, 57
Qutb, Jamshed, 62
Qutb Khan, 17
Qutb Minar, 7, 8
Qutbshahi Sultans (dynasty), 55, 56, 57
Qutbuddin, Sultan, 31
Qutlugh Khan, 53

Raghu Rao, 58
Rai Karna, 47
Rai, Karnadeva II, 47
Rai Pithora, 7 : Qila, 7
Rai Singh, 33, 34
Raigarh, 88
Raivi, 90, 91
Raja Harbang's Fort, 78
Rajaram, 91; his tomb, 90
Rajasthan, 1, 24, 33, 82, 103
Rajdev, 35
Rajghat (Rohtasgarh), 70
Rajgiri, 99
Rajagriha, 3
Rajputana, 24, 76
Rajputs, 13, 15, 28, 30, 32, 35, 41, 83, 89; civilisation, 27; ladies, 56
Ram Raja of Satara, 92
Ramchandra, Raja, 18
Ramachandradeva, King, 45, 47
Ramaraya, 52, 57
Ramayana, 2
Ramdas, Sant, 86
Rampol gate: (Chitor Fort), 27; (Kumbhalgarh fort), 30
Rana Sanga, 29, 67
Ranaraya, 62
Ranawalla, 26
Rang Mahal : (Red Fort Delhi), 11; (Rohtasgarh), 70
Ranganath temple (Srirangapatam), 97
Rangin Mahal (Bidar Fort), 61
Rangoon, 11
Rani Talab (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Ranjit Singh, Maharaja, 20, 80, 103, 104
Rao, Raghunath, 87
Rasmala, 39
Ratan Singh, 28, 28fn, 67
Ratan Singh II, 29
Ratnagiri, 93
Ratnakuta, 15
Rathors, 24, 32, 33
Ratipal, 26
Rawal, Bapa, 28
Rawal Har Rai, 24
Rawalpindi, 3
Red Fort, Agra *see* Agra Fort
Red Fort (Lal Qila) (Delhi), 7, 9-11, 34; buildings 11; Diwan-i-Am, 10; Diwan-i-Khas, 10-11; entrances (gates) 11; Rang Mahal, 11; Musamman Burj, Khwabgah, 11; Hammam, 11; Sawan-Bhadon, 11; Moti Masjid, 11; Hira Manzil, 11
Rehal Hills, 69
Reynell General, 104, 105
Rig-veda, 2
Roe, Sir Thomas, 68
Rohtas, 69
Rohtasgarh, 69 ; buildings, 70; gates, 70; temples, 70
Rohitashwa, Prince, 68, 69
Ropar, 111
Rose, Sir Hugh, 13
Rudramma, Queen of Warangal, 49, 50
Rumi Khan, 71

Sachiv, Shankraji Narayan, 89
Sadana, Jaisingh, 39
Sadashiv Rao Bhau, 52, 58, 59

Sadhoba, 93
Sadulla Khan, 30, 98
Safdar Khan, 82
Sahayadurga forts, 38
Sahu, 87
Sahyadri range of hills, 88
Saif Khan, 19
Sainyadurga forts, 38
Sajjangad, 86
Sakas, 25
Saket, 3
Sakharam Babu, 92
Salilidurga forts, 38
Salim, Prince *see* Jahangir
Salim Shah, 9
Salimgarh fort, Delhi, 9
Samar Singh, King, 28
Samprati, (a Jain King), 30
Samviddha forts, 38
Sangameshwar, 93
Sanghin Darwaza (Hari Parbat), 79, 80
Sangram Singh, Rana, 26
Sansarchand, 19, 20
Sanyasins, 31
Saraswati, 1, 77, 93
Sarbar Khan, 32
Sas-Bahu Mandirs (Gwalior Fort), 14
Sat Mandir (Bijapur), 64
Satavahanas, 57
Sati, 28fn
Sawai Madhopur, 24
Sawan-Bhadon (Red Fort, Delhi), 11
Scindia, Mahadaji, 13, 40, 83
Sen Suraj, 12
Shadi Khan, 78
Shah Alam, 11
Shah Mal, 70
Shahab-ud-din, 71
Shahbaz Khan, 31
Shahi Hamam (Bidar Fort), 61
Shahi Malkhana (Bidar Fort), 61
Shahjahan, Emperor, 9-11, 30, 36, 44, 55, 60, 62, 68, 82, 83, 109
Shahjahan Mahal (Gwalior Fort), 14
Shahji, 62, 88, 89, 99
Shahjahanabad, 9
Shahpur gate (Bijapur), 63
Shankraji Narayan, 90
Shayista Khan, 89
Shaikh Ahmad Khathu, 43
Shambhubhan gun (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Shambhuji, 91, 92
Shankaradeva, Prince, 47, 48
Sher Khan, 71, 72
Sher Mandal, 9
Sher Shah, 67, 68, 69, 72
Shergarh, 9
Shih Huang Ti, Emperor, 1
Shish or Jahangir Mahal (Gwalior Fort), 14
Shinde, 58, 59
Shishupalgarh (Bhubaneshwar), 4
Shivaji, Chhtrapati, 59, 63, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 99
Shivaji IV, 93
Shujaat Khan, 67
Shuja, Prince, 78, 109
Shuja-ud-daula, 78
Shyamnagar, 111
Sidh Raj, 39
Sidi of Janjira, 91, 92
Sidi Jauhar, 93
Sidi Surul Khan, 92
Sikandharva forts, 38
Silah Khana (Golkunda), 56
Silhara Bhoja Raja, 93
Silla gate (Bikaner), 33
Singar Chaori Temple (Chitor fort), 27
Singh Pol (Amber Fort), 35
Singhana, 47
Sinhgarh Fort, 86; gates, 88
Sinsina or Jeth Malwali Burj (Bharatpur), 103
Siraj-ud-daula, 109
Sirhind, 19, 111
Siri Fort, 7-8
Siriji Mahant, 106
Sirke, Raja, 90
Sivir forts, 38
Skinner's Horse, 104
Slave dynasty, 25, 82
Sleigh, Brigadier General, 106
Smith, Major General, 103
Sojat gate (Jodhpur Fort), 32
Sonar Quila *see* Jaisalmer
Soyarabai, 91
Sravasti, 3
Srinagar, 79, 80
Srirangapatam temples, 97
St. George gate (Fort William), 110
Sthariya forts, 38

Subbul Singh, 24
Subuktagin, 71
Sukta-jen-dor, 2
Sultan Abdullah, 57
Sultan Ahmad's mosque (Ahmedabad), 44
Sur, Adil Shah, 82
Sur Mandir (Bikaner Fort), 34
Sur tank (Bikaner Fort), 34
Suraj Kund (Gwalior Fort), 15
Suraj Pol : (Amber Fort), 35; (Chitor Fort), 27
Surajmal, 103
Surat Singh, Maharaja, 34
Sur Singh, Sawai Raja, 32
Suri, Sher Shah (Sher Khan), 9, 13, 15, 17, 68, 71, 82
Surjan Singh, 26, 27
Suryaji, 89
Suryavamshis, 68
Swami Raja, 72
Syed Allauddin, 82

Takhat Mahal (Bidar), 61
Takhat Singh, Maharaja, 32
Takht Padshahi (Rohtasgarh), 69
Talikota, 46, 52, 53
Tallaqi Darwaza (Purana Qila), 9
Tamasis, 15
Tanaji Malsure, 86, 89
Tani forts, 3
Tanjore, 111
Tansen, 12
Tapasthali, 15
Tara Mati, 56
Tarabai, 90
Taragarh fort, 22
Tarain, battle of, 36
Tarapur, 111
Tavernier, 15
Taxila, 3
Tazul Massir, 17
Teen Darwaza (Panhala fort), 93
Teli Mandir (Gwalior Fort), 14
Telingana, 50, 51, 55
Tellichery, 14
Temple, Sir Richard, 88
Tikona Fort, 90
Tilak, Lokmanya, 5
Timmanna, 97
Timur, 13, 19, 26
Tippu Sultan, 97, 98
Tirumal Deva (Srirangapatam), 97
Tirumala, 53
Tirumalaiya (Srirangapatam), 97
Tod, J., 23, 28fn, 30, 31, 33
Tomar Ray, Kirti Singh, 14
Tomar Rajputs, 13
Tonk, Shah of, 73
Toramana, 12
Treasury gate (Fort William), 110
Treaty of Poona (13 June 1817), 59
Treaty of Surji Arjangaon, 59
Trichirapally (Trichy), 99, 111
Trimbak, 89
Triveni gate (Allahabad fort), 78
Tucker, St. George, 72
Tughluq, Firuz, 8, 19
Tughluq, Ghiyas-ud-din, 8, 50, 57
Tughluq, Mohammed bin, 8, 13, 19, 40, 48, 51, 53
Tughluqs (dynasty), 8, 29, 48, 82
Tughlaqabad, Fort of, 7, 8
Tung Fort, 90
Tungabhadra, 51, 52
Turkish Mahal (Bidar Fort), 61
Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, 82

Udaipur, 27, 28, 30; Maharana of, 24; Fort, 35
Uday Singh, Rana, 29, 30
Udayaditya, 97
Udaynala, 70
Ugrasen, 3
Ujjain, 4, 71
Ulugh Khan (Balban), 25, 26, 28, 50, 59
Uttar Pradesh, 71, 111

Vaghbhata, 25
Vahinimukha forts, 38
Vaisali, 3
Vajragad, 86
Vana forts, 3
Vanadurga forts, 4, 38
Varanasi, 3, 72
Varanasibai, 92
Varma, Chandra, 16
Varthima, 52
Vedas, 15
Vedic hymns, 2
Vellore, 111
Viduranagar (Bidar)r 59

Vikram (Palace, Gwalior Fort), 14
Vikramaditya, 29, 70
Vijayanagar, 45, 46, 54, 56, 57, 60, 91, 99, 111
Vijaypol gate (Kumbhalgarh fort), 30
Vijayapura (Bijapur,) 61, 62
Vindhyas, 15, 67, 71
Viranarayana, 25
Vishnu temple (Gwalior Fort), 15
Vishnu, Hill of, 81
Vishnuvardhana, 97
Vrajis, 3

Wales, Prince of, 110
Wali, Ahmed Shah, 60
Warangal, 45, 46, 55, 59
Water Gate : (Agra Fort), 82; (Fort William), 110
Wellesley, Lord, 58, 98
White, General, 13
Wodeyar, Chikkadevaraya, 97, 98
Wun Raj, 41

Yadavas, 24, 47, 57, 59, 87, 88
Yadu, 23
Yeshwant, Kiledar Vitthal, 92
Yesubai, 59

Zafar Khan, 54, 59
Zahir Didamari, Khwaja, 80
Zenana Palace of Allahabad, 35
Zenissar (Agra Fort), 83
Zulfikar Khan, 90